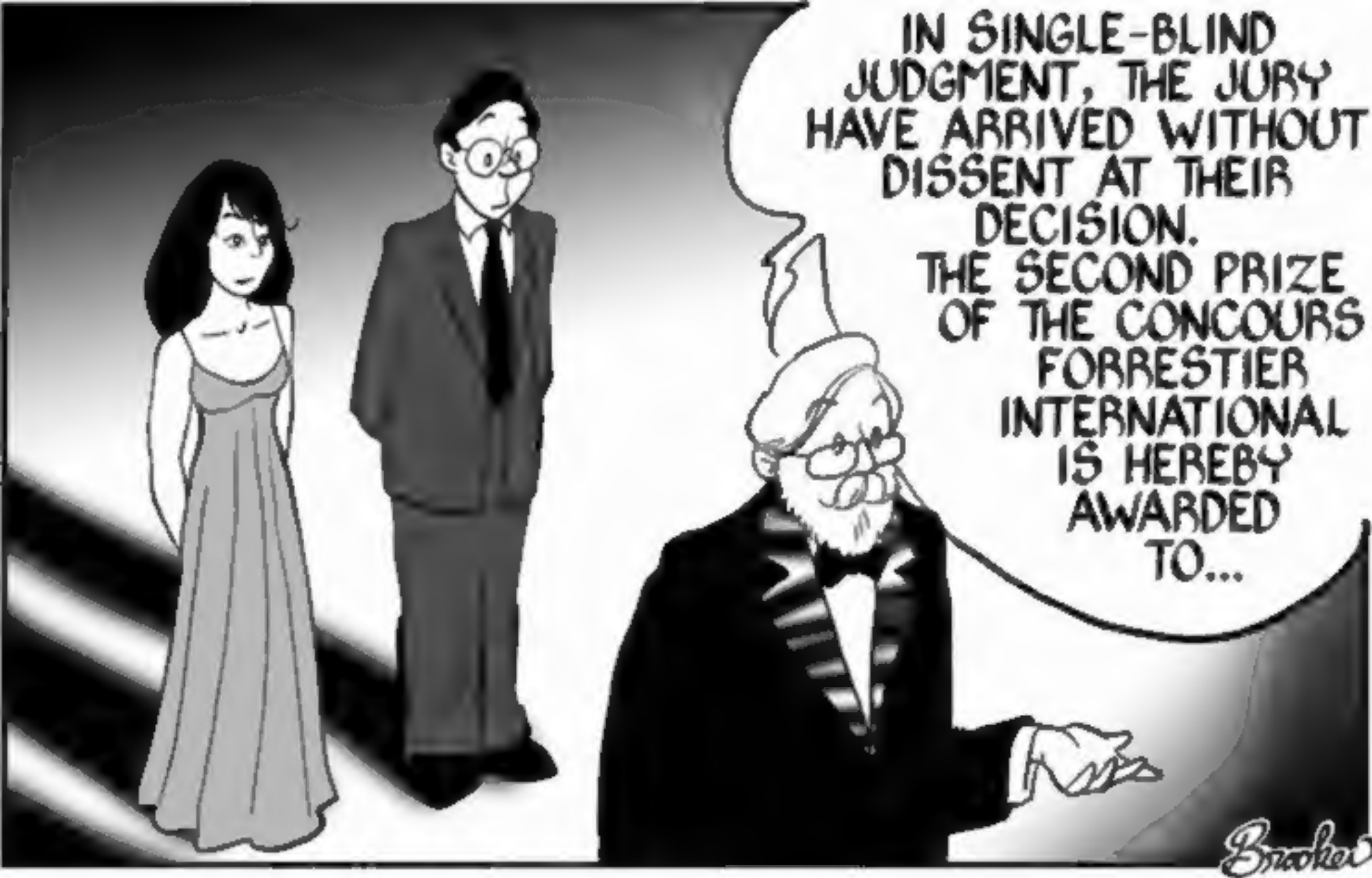
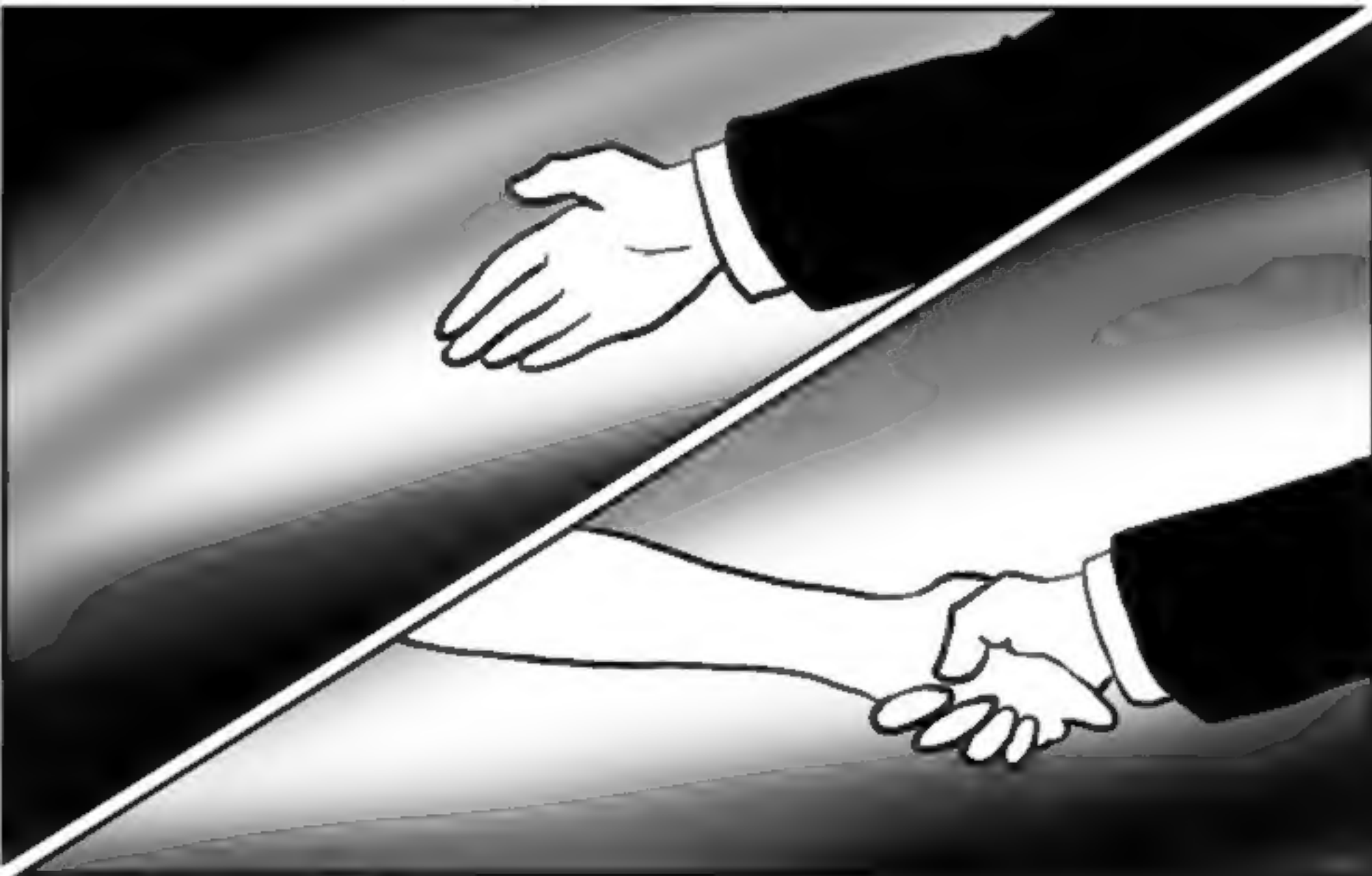




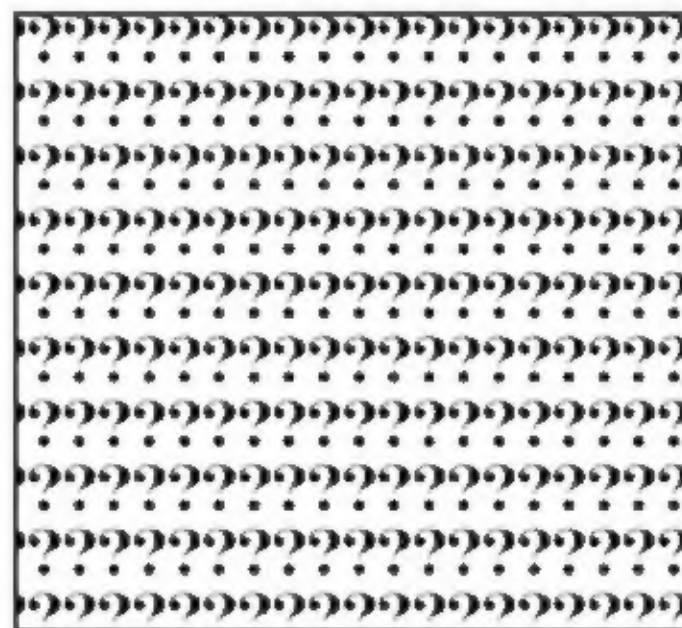
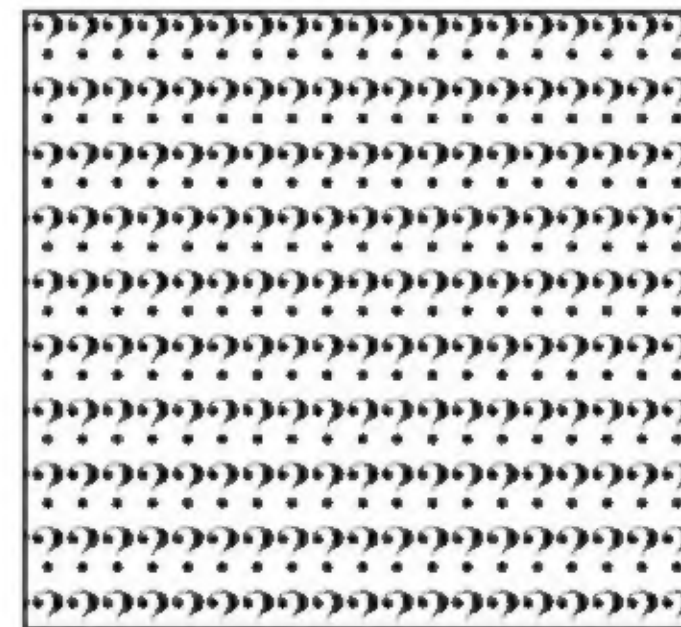
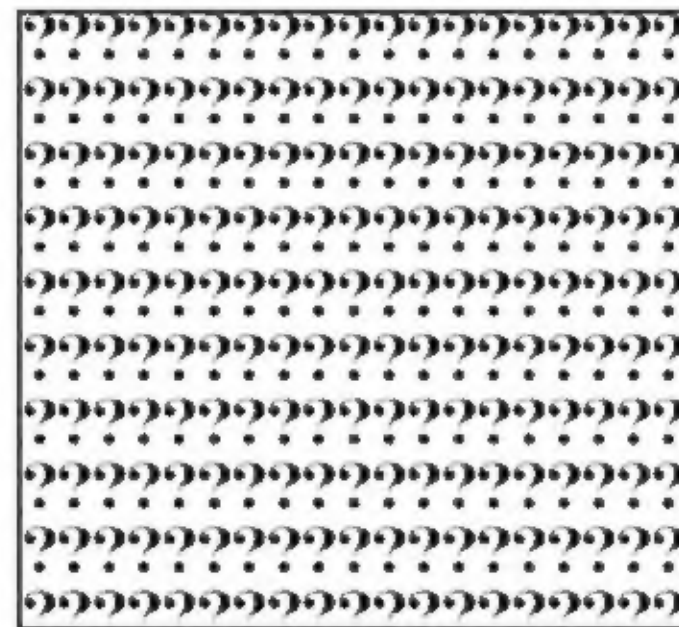
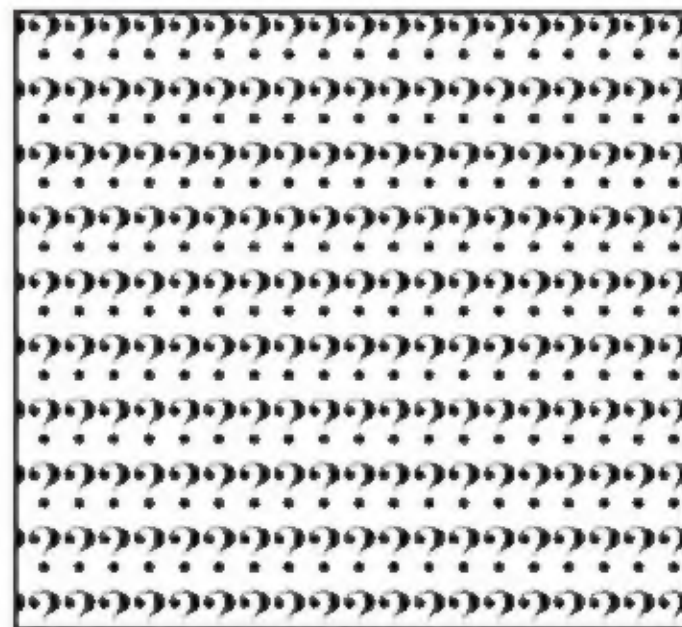
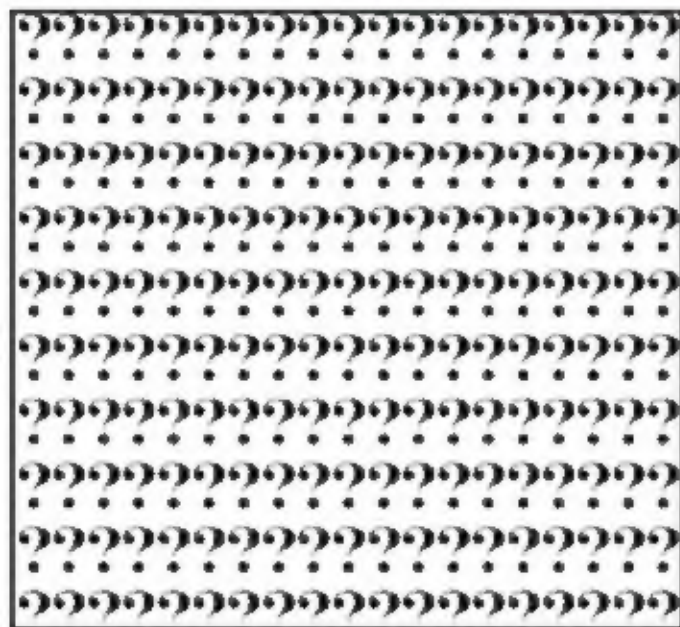
2009



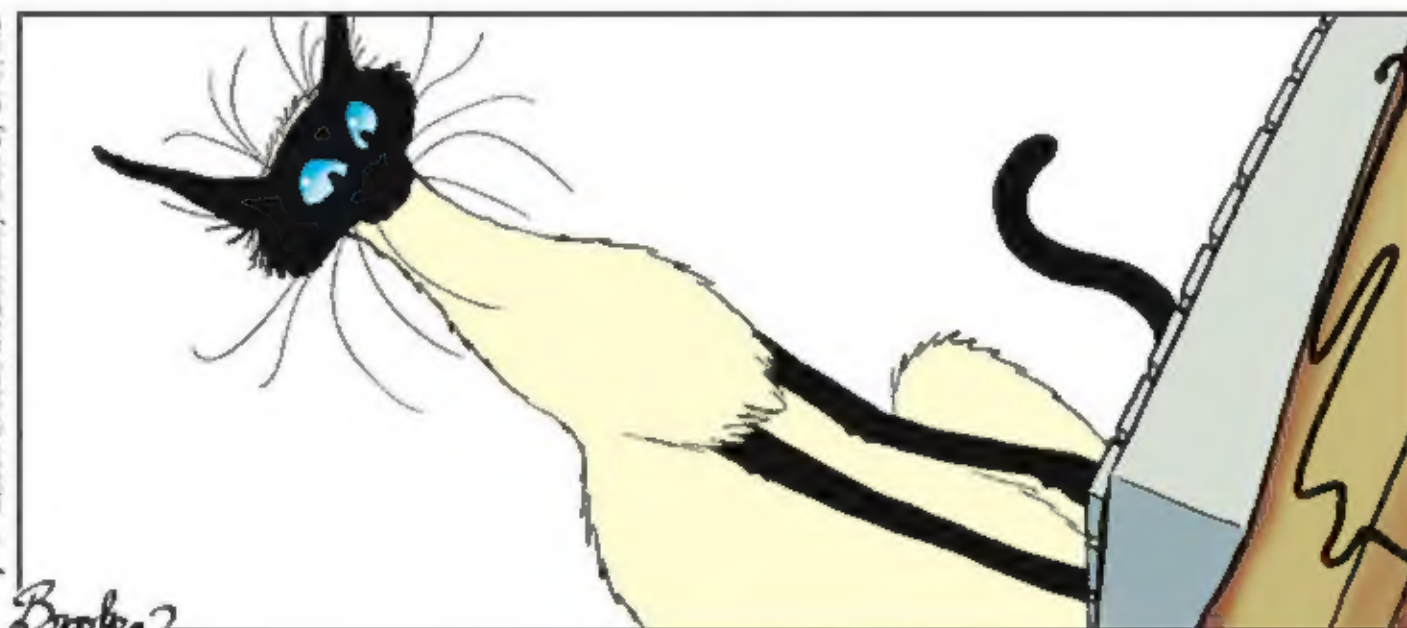








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DR. BURBER, AS A TRUSTEE OF THE UNIVERSITY, I WAS WONDERING IF I MIGHT PULL A LITTLE STRING AND ASK YOU TO MEET MY SON. HE'S SET ON BEING PRE-MED, AND HE'LL BE TAKING A COURSE FROM YOU THIS TERM.



AND YOU'D LIKE ME TO PROMISE THAT MY PART IN HIS APPROACH TO MEDICAL SCHOOL WILL BE A COAST. ...AM I CORRECT?



I THINK WE SEE EYE TO EYE.

THAT'S FINE...IF YOU PROMISE TO BE THE FIRST PERSON ON WHOSE PROSTATE HE PERFORMS SURGERY...AND I GET TO WATCH.



HAVE WE A PACT?

UM...  
...NEVER MIND.



I ENJOYED SEEING EYE TO EYE WITH YOU.

DR. BURBER, THEY SAY YOU  
SPLIT YOUR TIME BETWEEN  
A FARM IN THE COUNTRY AND  
YOUR JOB HERE. DOES THAT  
COMPROMISE THE QUALITY  
OF YOUR TEACHING?



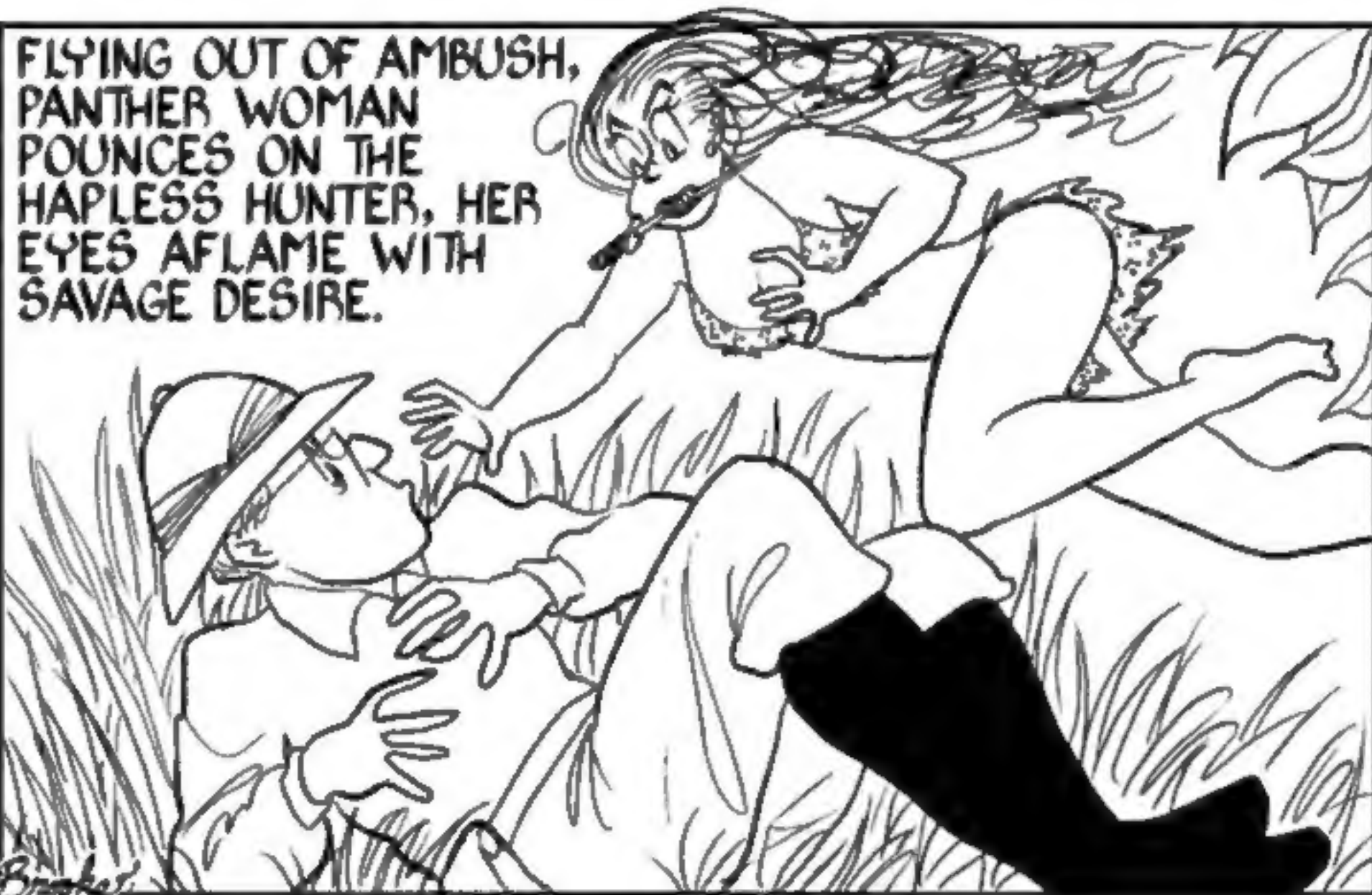
NOT IN THE LEAST. I FIND  
THERE'S NOTHING LIKE  
SPENDING A DAY  
IN THE COMPANY OF  
BIG, DUMB,  
FERTILIZER-  
SPEWING  
BEASTS  
TO PROMOTE  
A HEALTHY,  
RIGOROUS  
PERSPECTIVE  
ON WHAT  
I DO.



AND  
THEN  
I GO BACK  
TO THE  
FARM.



FLYING OUT OF AMBUSH,  
PANTHER WOMAN  
POUNCES ON THE  
HAPLESS HUNTER, HER  
EYES AFLAME WITH  
SAVAGE DESIRE.



AS MUCH AS I ENJOY THESE  
DIVERTISSEMENTS WHEN THE  
FACULTY LOUNGE IS EMPTY...  
...COULD YOU QUIT SEIZING  
THE NUMBER TWO PENCILS  
IN YOUR  
TEETH?

THEY ALWAYS SNAP  
IN HALF...AND  
PEOPLE ARE  
BEGINNING  
TO TALK.





PANTHER WOMAN  
WATCHES, INTENT,  
AS A GROUP OF  
WHITE HUNTERS  
PASS BENEATH  
HER BOWER IN  
THE JUNGLE  
CANOPY. THE ONLY  
PREDATOR  
WHOSE CUNNING  
THEY TRULY  
FEAR, SHE  
POISES HERSELF  
TO PICK OFF THE  
STRAGGLER  
IN THEIR PARTY.



I'M SUPPOSED  
TO SPEAK AT  
THE TRUSTEES'  
LUNCHEON.

NOT UNTIL  
I'VE HAD  
MY WAY  
WITH YOU.



I REALLY HAVE TO GO...  
...I'M DELIVERING A LONG  
AND DETAILED ANALYSIS  
TO THE TRUSTEES ABOUT  
THE FUTURE OF MEDICAL  
EDUCATION AT THE  
UNIVERSITY.



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1-9-09

ALL RIGHT...AS JULIETTE  
BURBER, FACULTY MEMBER,  
I'LL RELEASE YOU. BUT AS  
PANTHER WOMAN, JUNGLE  
QUEEN, I'M WEARING AN  
OCELOT-PRINT TEDDY...AND  
IT HAS YOUR NAME ON IT.



GENTLEMEN,  
I WILL BE  
BRIEF.





SOMETIMES WHEN THINGS  
ARE JUST GETTING TO ME,  
I WISH I COULD BE RIGHT  
THERE TO TALK TO YOU.



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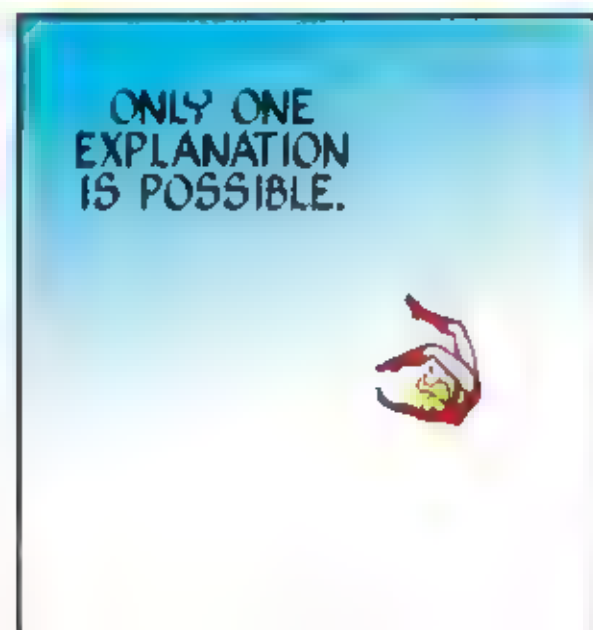
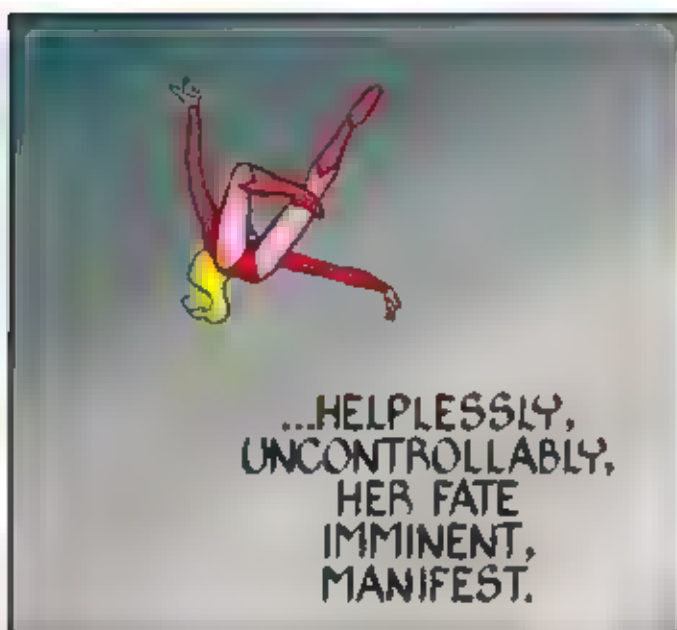
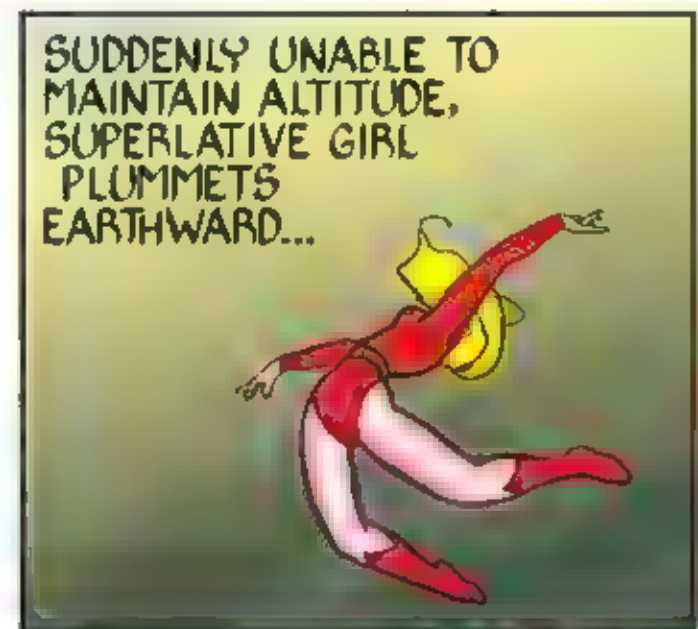
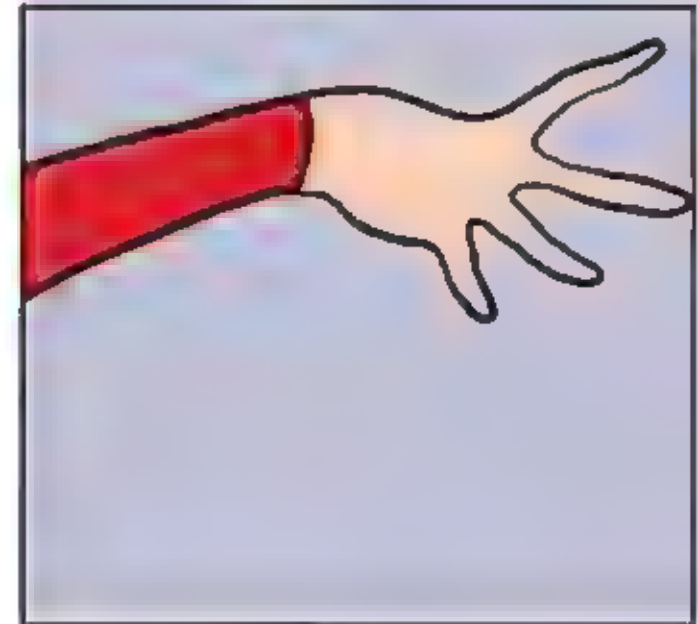
CLOSE YOUR  
EYES...JUST  
CLOSE YOUR  
EYES.



*Brooke*



IT  
WORKS!

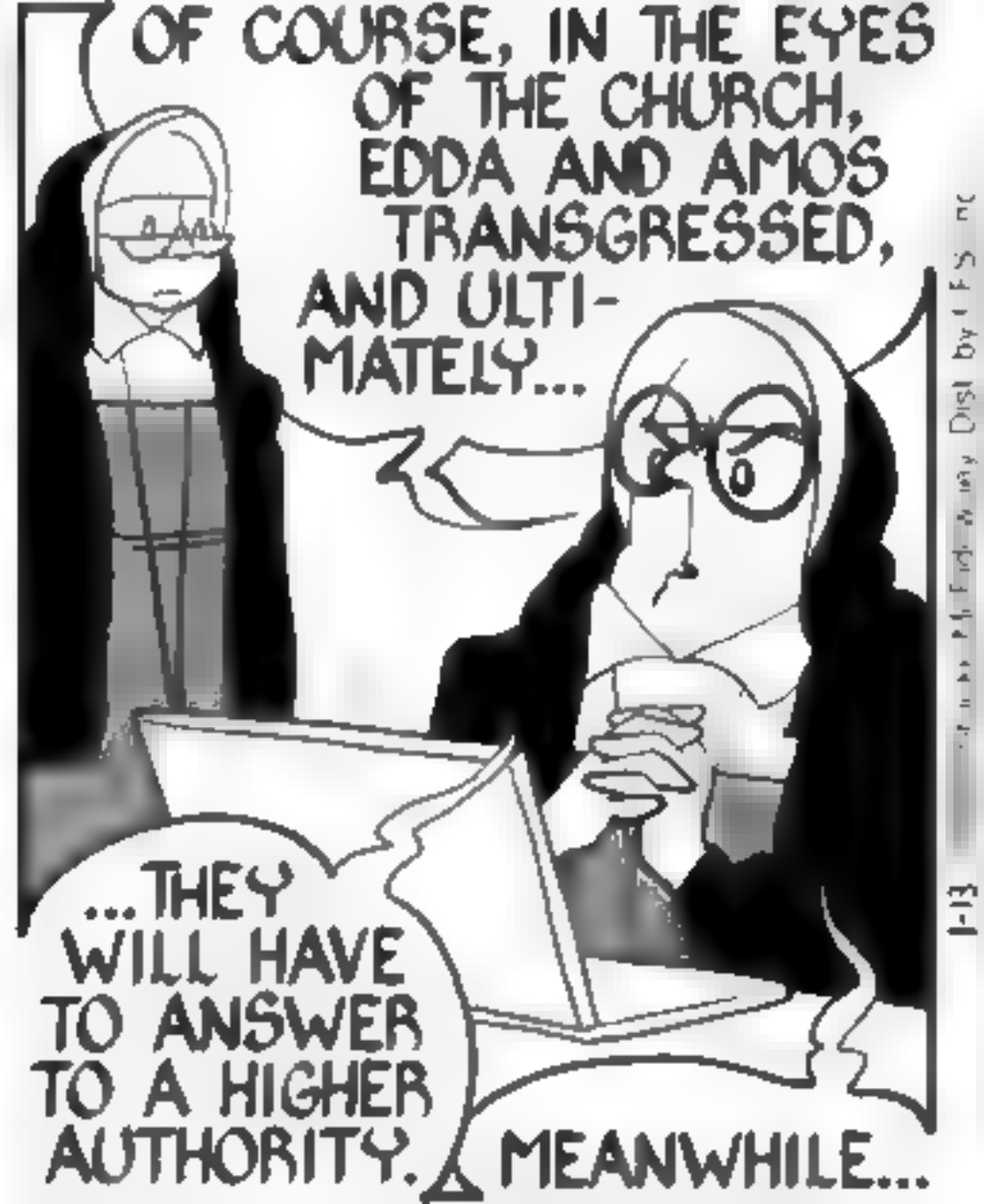


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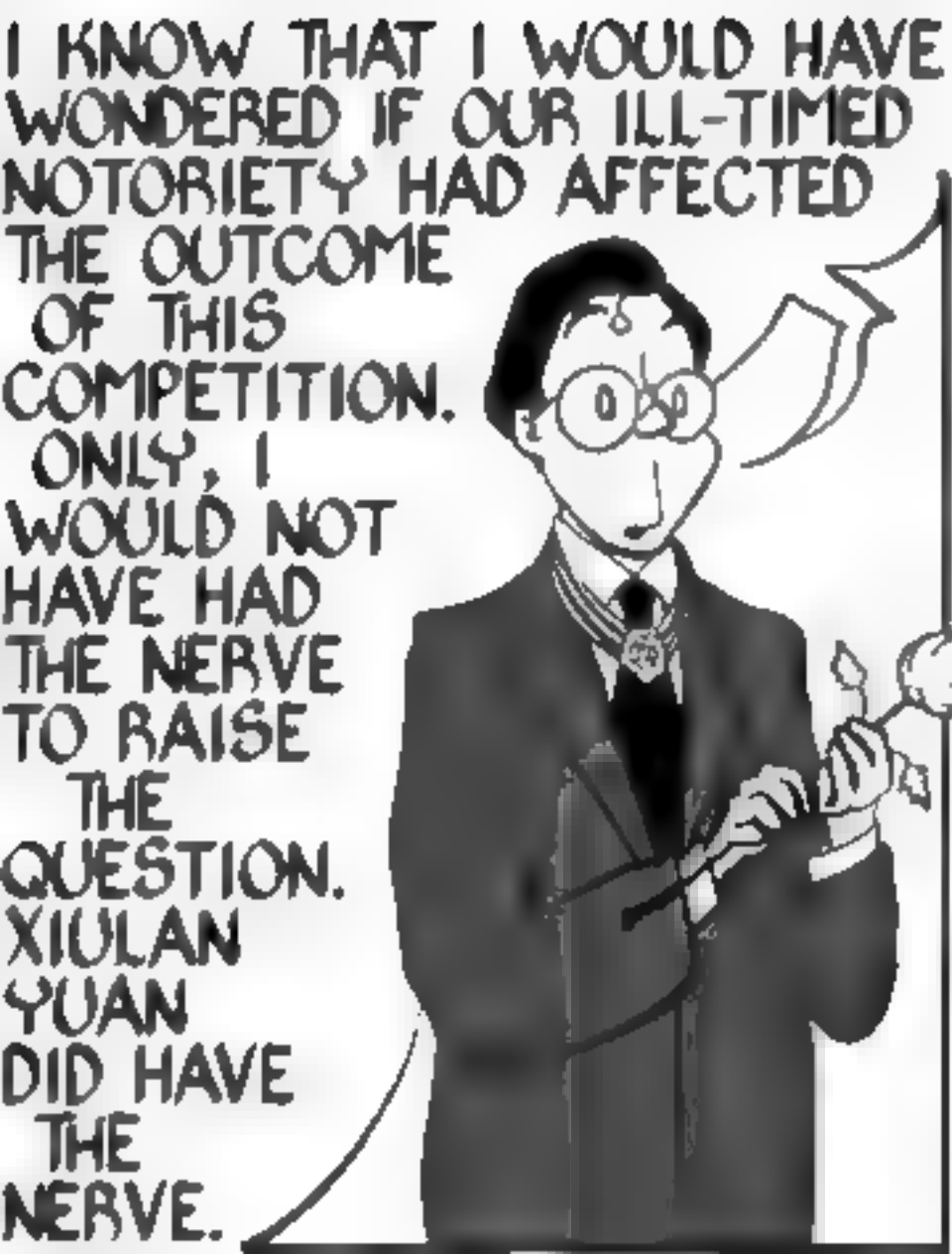












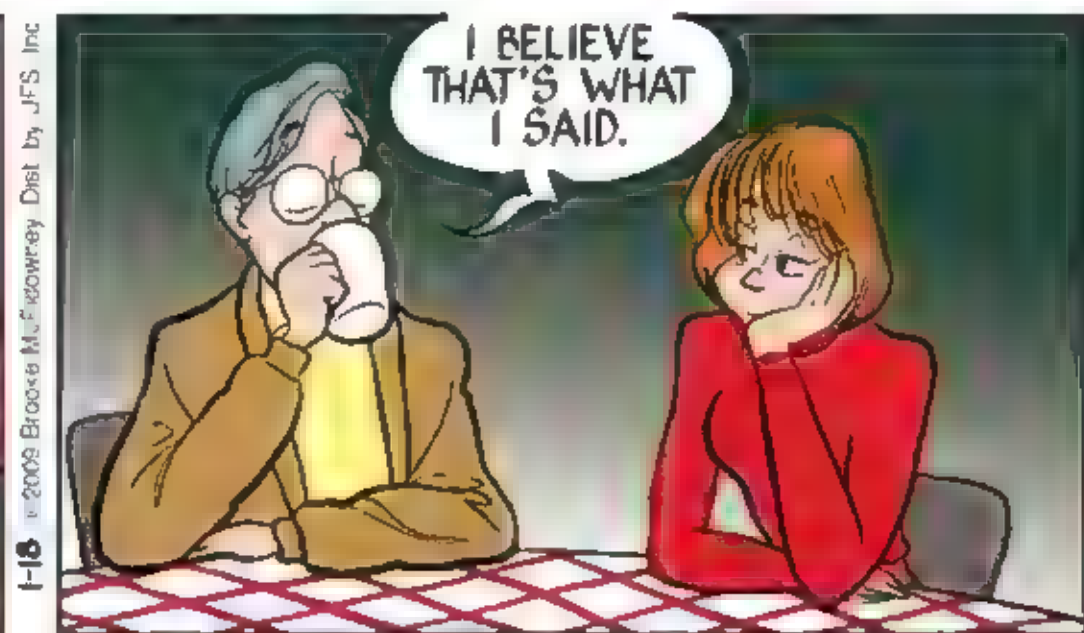
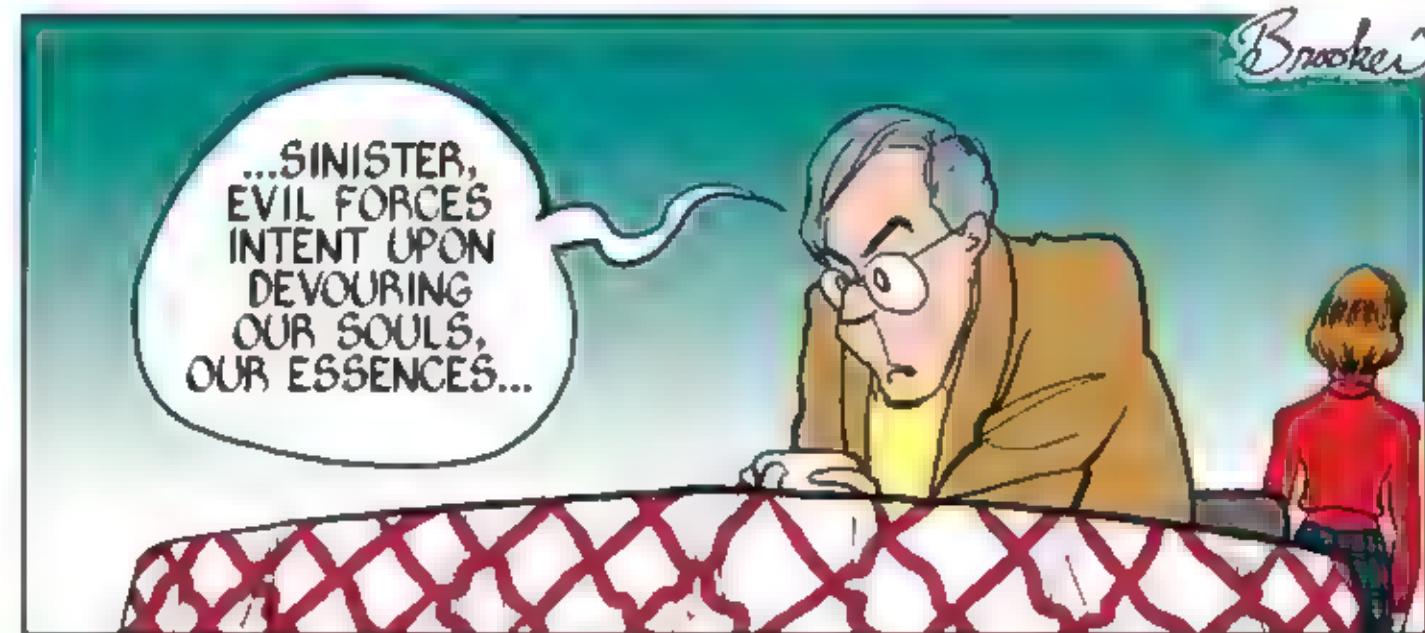
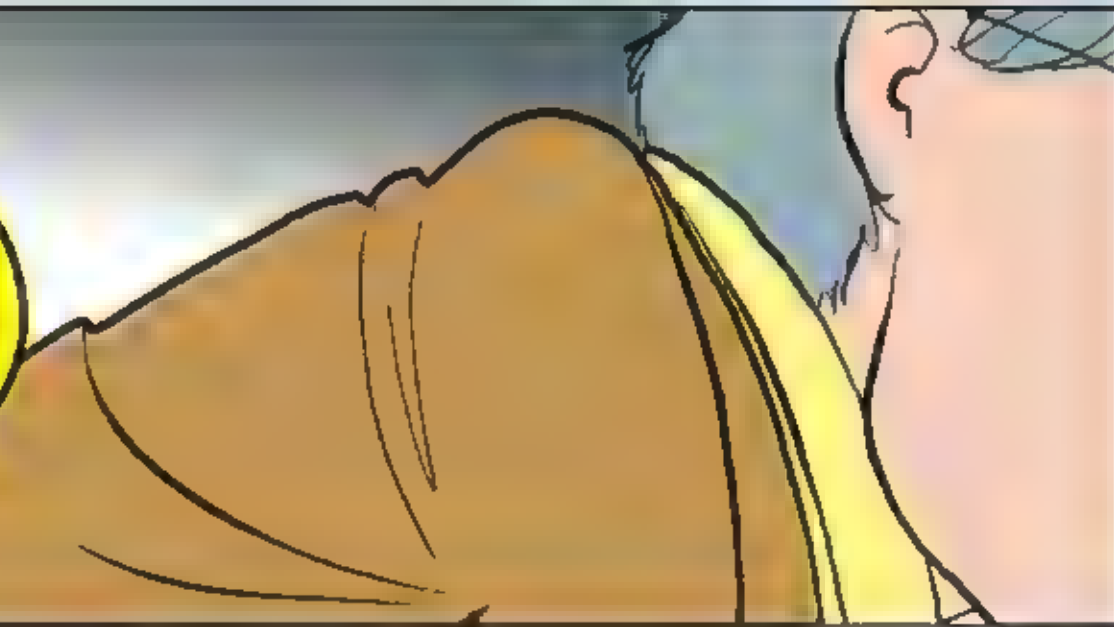








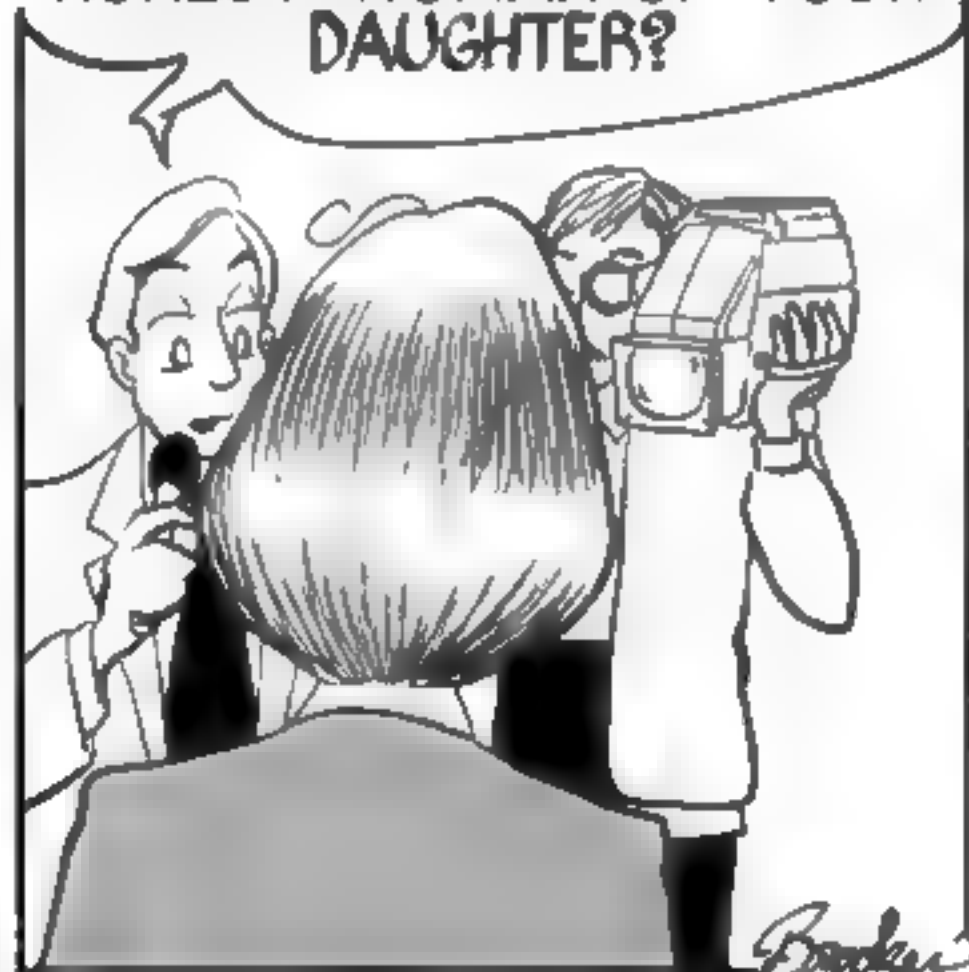
# 9 CHICKWEED LANE



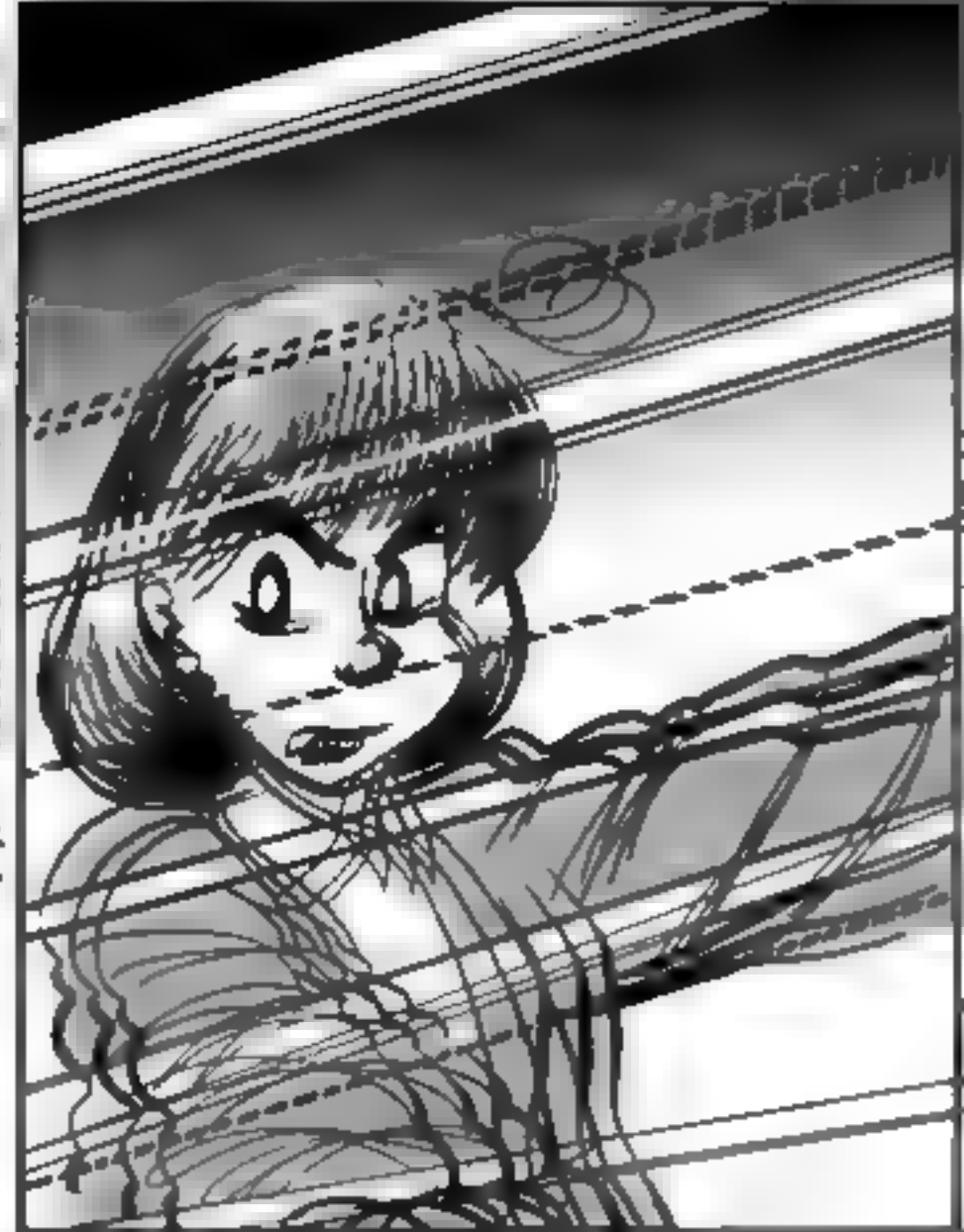
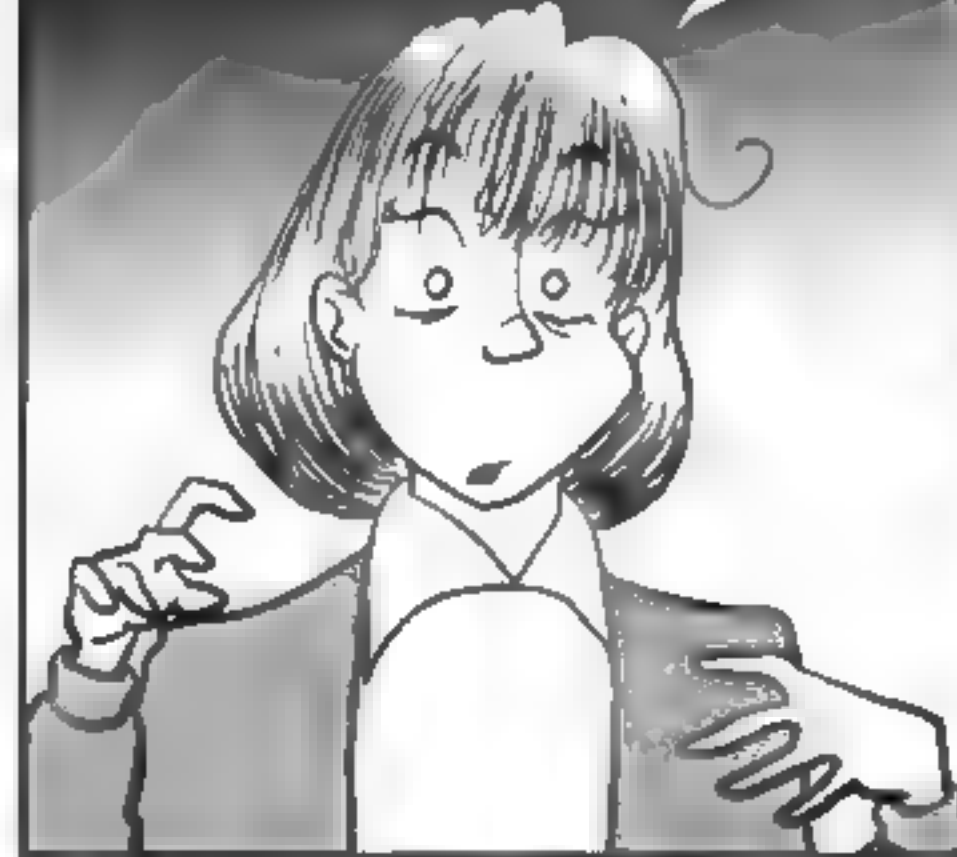
I'M VERY PROUD OF THEM  
BOTH. THEY WENT TO A  
PRESTIGIOUS COMPETITION,  
AND UNDER ADVERSE  
CIRCUMSTANCES WERE  
ABLE TO SHINE.



WHAT WILL HAPPEN NOW?  
DO YOU THINK AMOS VAN  
HOESEN WILL MAKE AN  
HONEST WOMAN OF YOUR  
DAUGHTER?



MY DAUGHTER?...  
...DISHONEST?







"AS AMOS VAN HOESEN'S  
FORMER SCHOOL  
HEADMISTRESS,  
YOU MUST HAVE  
CERTAIN FEELINGS  
ABOUT THE PUBLIC  
ATTENTION THAT HE  
AND EDDA BURBER  
ATTRACTED IN BRUSSELS.  
WOULD YOU SAY THAT  
THEIR RELATIONSHIP  
WAS JUST A TIP  
OF THE ICEBERG  
LURKING BEHIND  
YOUR SCHOOL'S  
GATES?"



STICK OUT  
YOUR HAND.

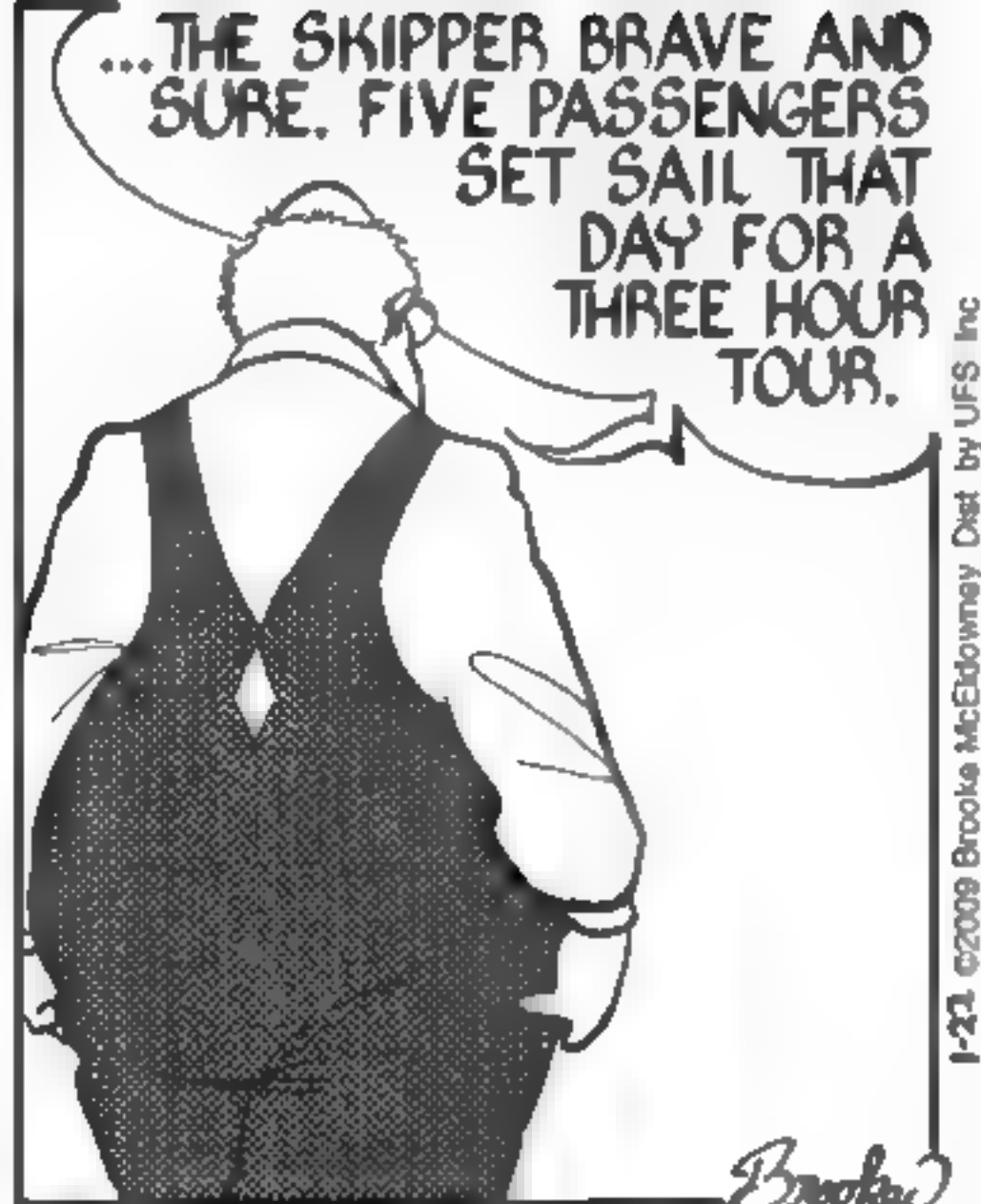
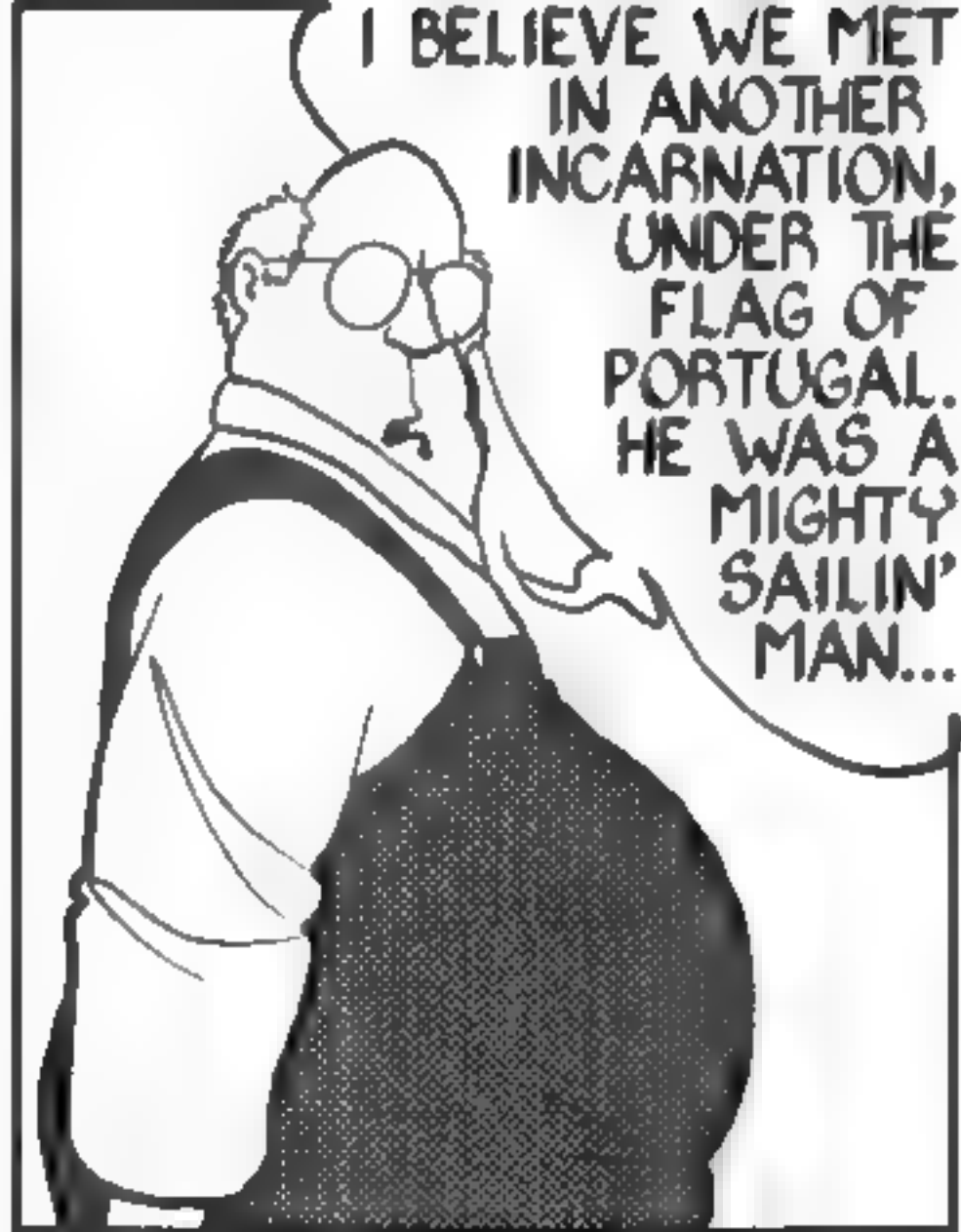
Brooke

YEAH, I REMEMBER AMOS VAN HOESEN.  
I USED TO BEAT HIM UP IN SCHOOL.  
HE AND THIS BLOND CHICK  
ALWAYS HUNG OUT  
TOGETHER. HE WROTE  
THESE REALLY LONG,  
STUPID POEMS, AND  
SYMPHONIES AND  
STUFF, AND HE  
PLAYED SOME  
GEEKY INSTRUMENT,  
NOT A REAL  
INSTRUMENT  
LIKE A GUITAR.  
TALK  
ABOUT A  
LOSER.

"AND  
WHAT HAVE  
YOU  
BEEN  
DOING  
SINCE  
LEAVING  
SCHOOL?"

TWENTY  
YEARS.

...WITHOUT  
PAROLE.



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WHAT'S A FOUR-LETTER  
WORD FOR "OSCULATE"?  
MAYBE IT'S "BUSS."  
"BUSS" WOULD FIT.



NO...I'M **SURE** THAT'S  
NOT WHAT THEY MEANT.  
...YOU USED TO HAVE  
A GOOD VOCABULARY.



*Brooke*



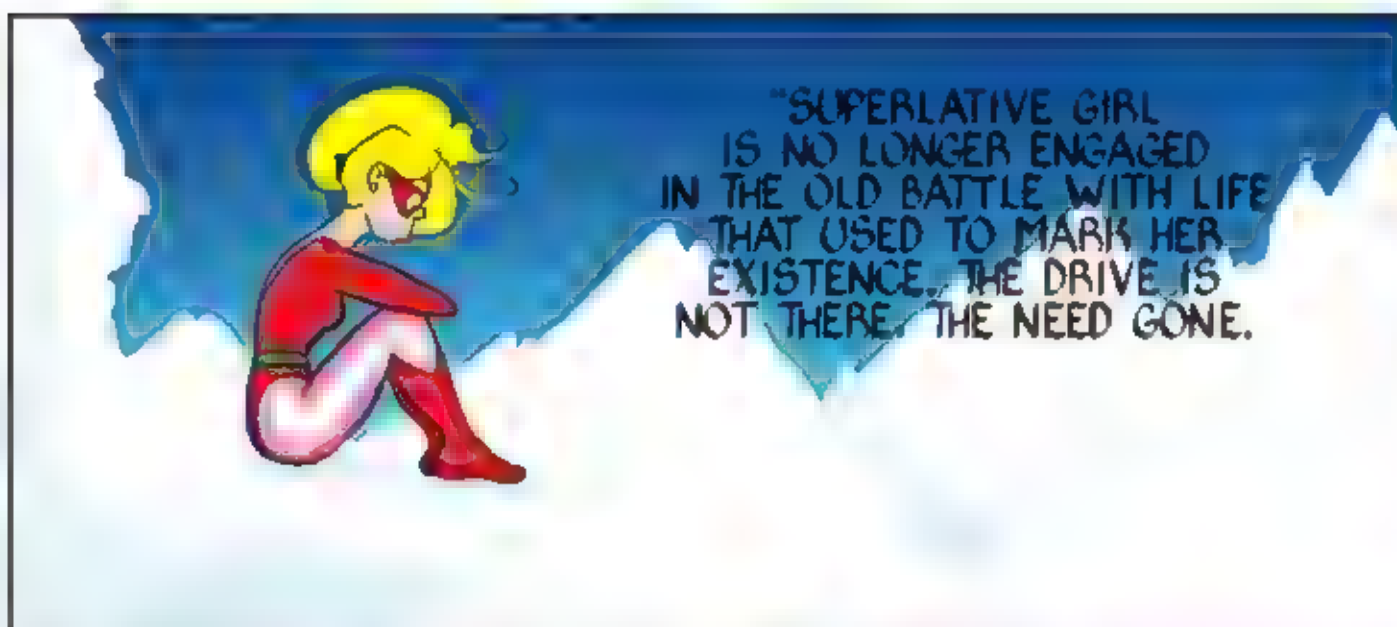
NOW YOU HAVE A  
WONDERFUL VOCABULARY.



NO, I DON'T KNOW  
WHERE HE IS.  
HE SAID HE HAD  
A LITTLE ERRAND.  
BUT IT'S NOT  
LIKE HIM  
TO BE LATE  
FOR A PERFORM-  
ANCE,  
SO I  
DON'T  
THINK  
YOU  
HAVE  
TO  
WORRY.

*Brooke*

I'M  
LOOKING  
FOR A VERY  
SPECIAL  
RING.

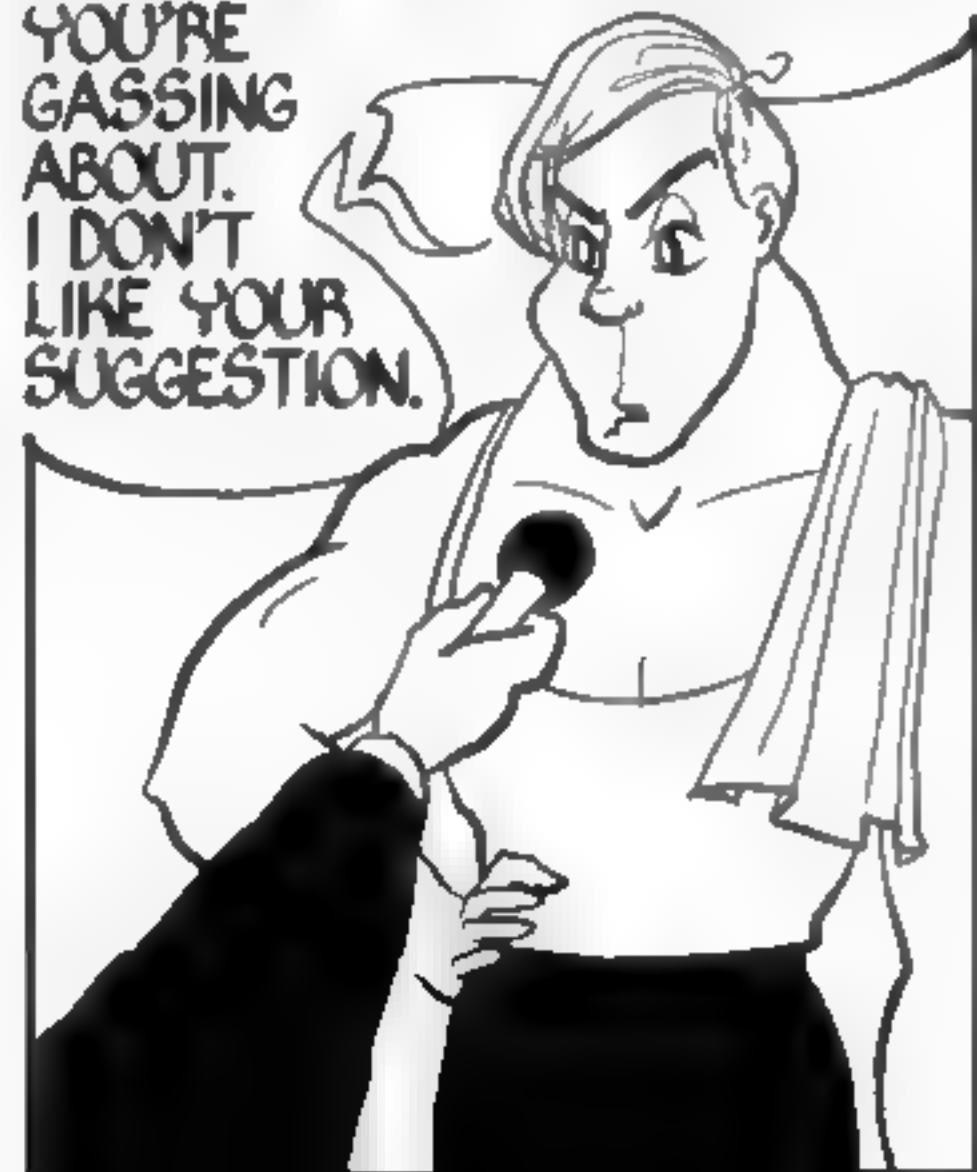




DO YOU THINK THE ATTENTION  
YOUR DANCE PARTNER HAS  
DRAWN WILL  
NEGATIVELY  
IMPACT ON  
THIS BALLET  
COMPANY AND  
HER CAREER?



LOOK, PAL, THIS IS TRUE LOVE  
YOU'RE  
GASSING  
ABOUT.  
I DON'T  
LIKE YOUR  
SUGGESTION.



WHAT'S  
THAT?



HE DROPPED HIS  
MICROPHONE.

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Brooke

AND WHEN THE REPORTER  
SUGGESTED TROUBLE FOR  
EDDA, I LOOMED OVER HIM  
AND HE BOLTED LIKE A  
RABBIT.

THAT  
WAS MANLY  
OF YOU.



I DO MANLY. JUST BECAUSE  
I'M GAY DOESN'T MEAN  
I CAN'T DO MANLY.

WANT TO  
SEE ME DO  
MANLY?



Brooke

SWEETIE,  
THAT'S NOT  
MANLY...  
...THAT'S  
PIRATE.

GAAARRGH!



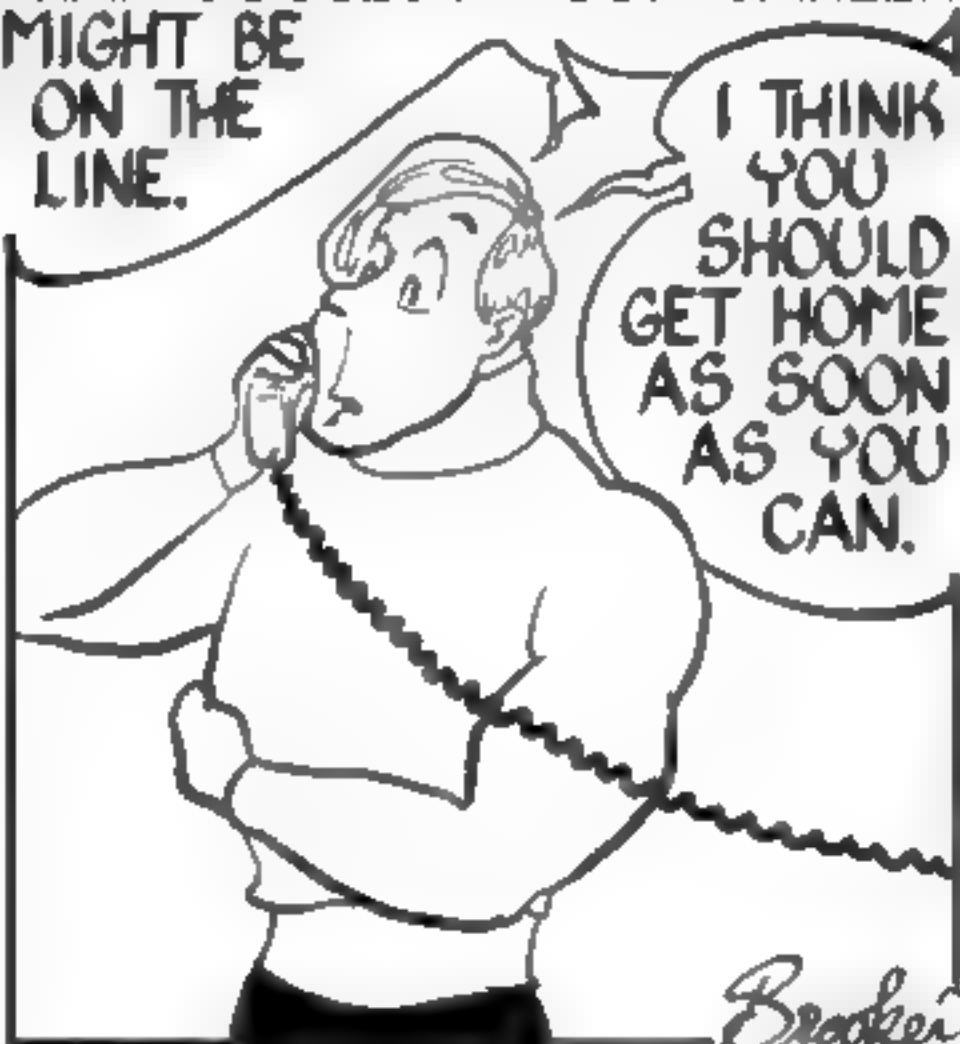
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WELL...  
THEY'RE  
MANLY.

SHOWS WHAT YOU  
KNOW ABOUT THE  
JOLLY  
ROGER.



EDDA, A REPORTER CAME BY  
WITH NOTHING BETTER TO DO  
THAN SUGGEST YOUR CAREER  
MIGHT BE  
ON THE  
LINE.



I THINK  
YOU  
SHOULD  
GET HOME  
AS SOON  
AS YOU  
CAN.

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Brooke

SETH, I'M BACKSTAGE, AND  
AMOS HASN'T SHOWN UP  
FOR HIS PERFORMANCE.  
IT'S GETTING CLOSE, AND HE  
FORGOT TO TURN ON HIS  
PHONE.



DON'T  
WORRY,  
DOLL.  
HE'LL  
BE THERE.  
HE'S  
ALWAYS  
ON  
TIME.

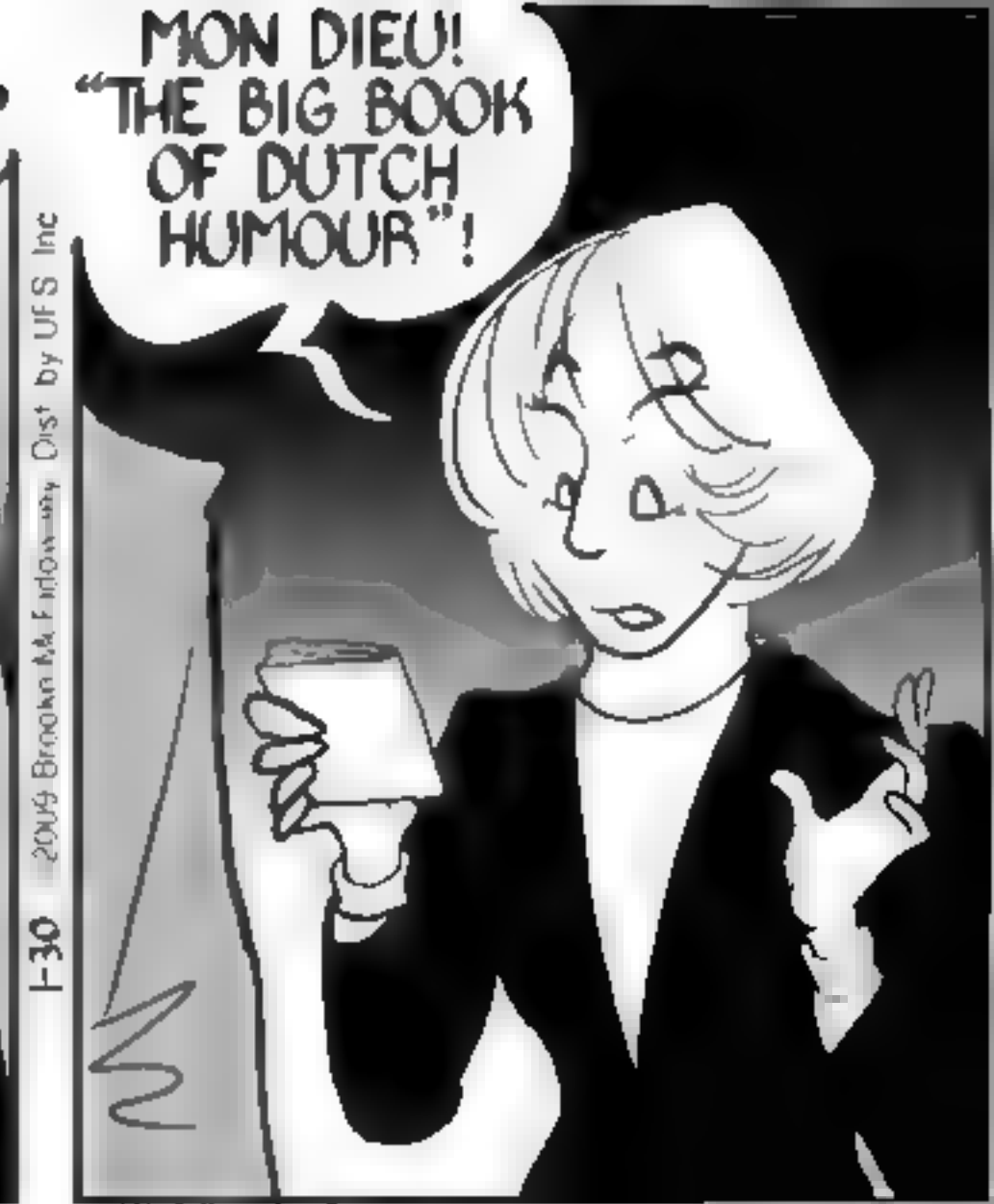


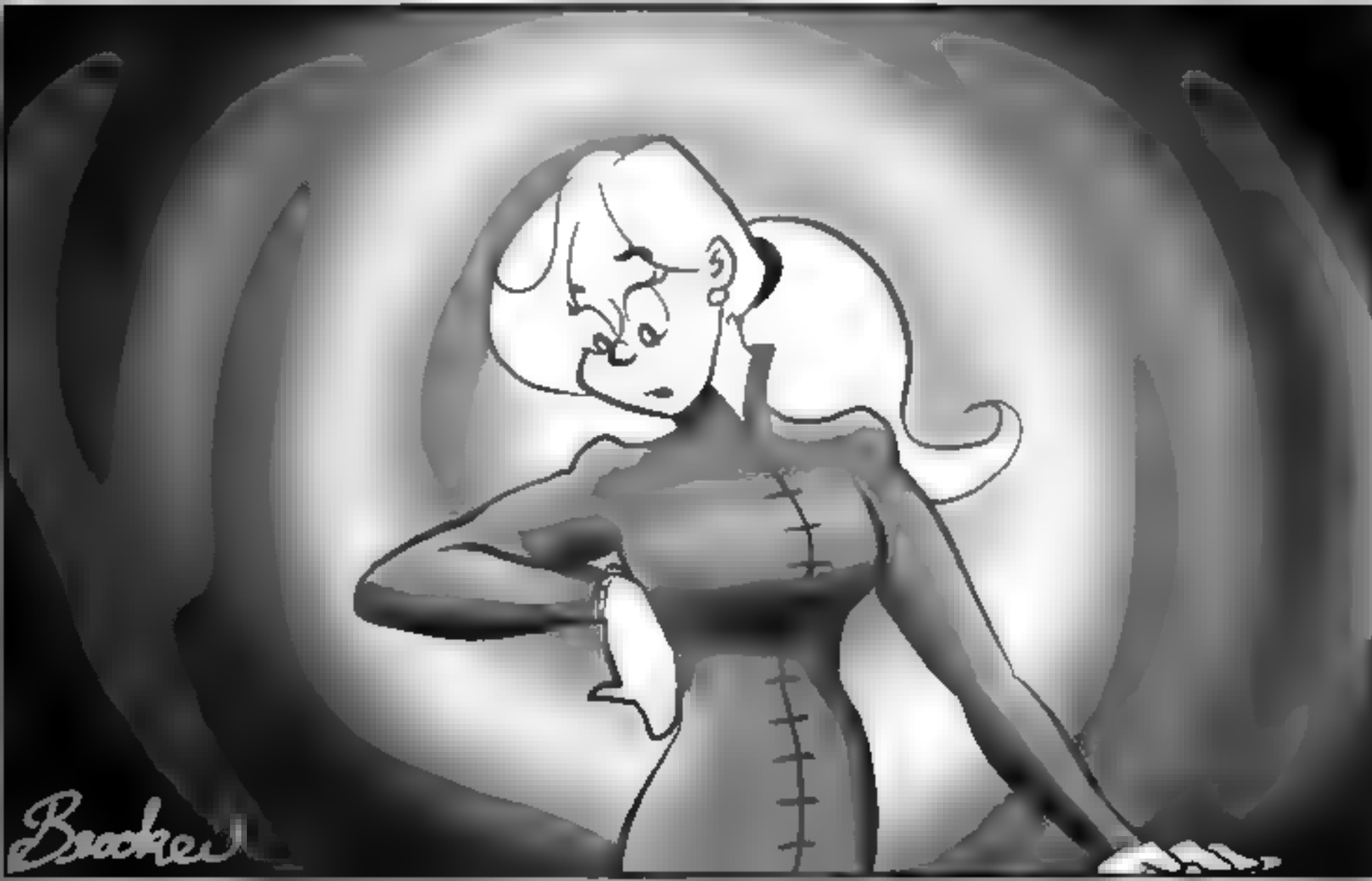
OH, LORD!  
...THIS RING...

IT'S  
PERFECT.









"THE BIG BOOK OF DUTCH HUMOUR"...I NEVER THOUGHT I'D HOLD ONE IN MY HANDS.



WITH THE ORIGINAL CARTOONS BY VAS DE FERENZ...ONLY 57 COPIES IN THE WORLD.

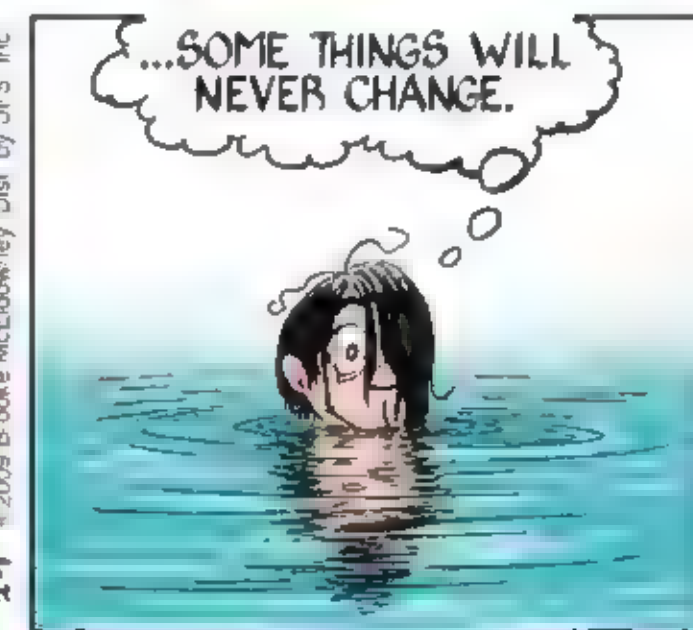
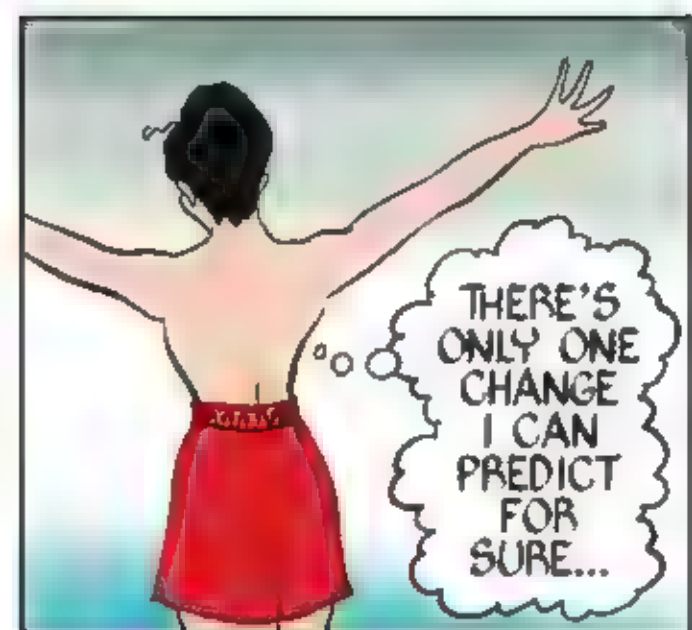
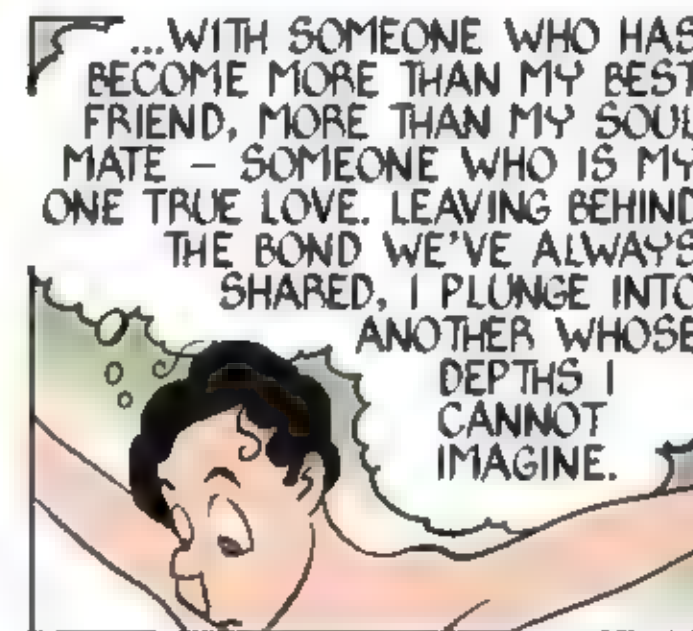
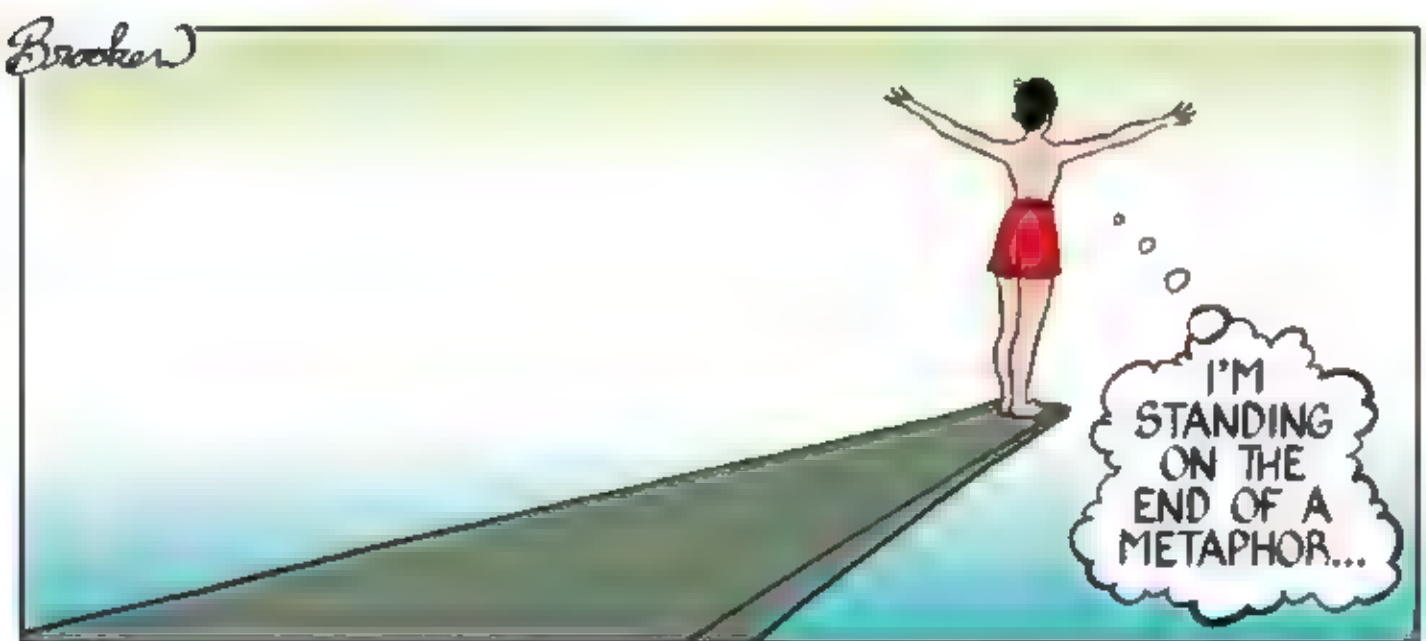
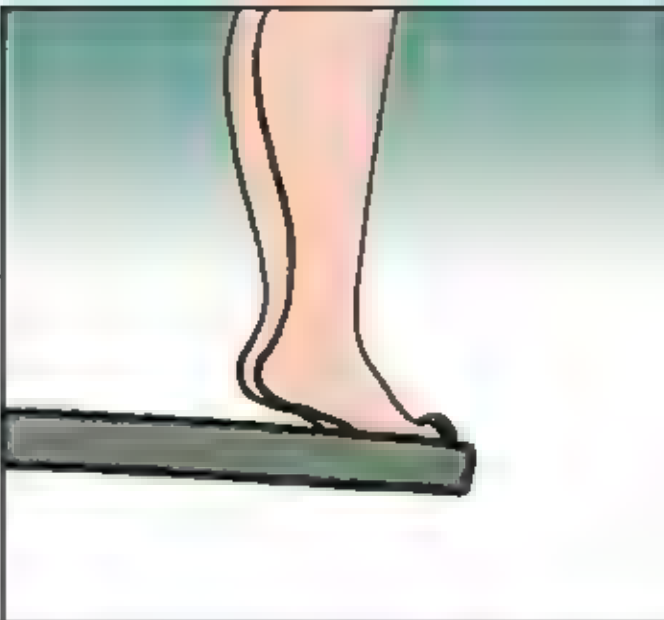
AND FOR WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BARTER IT?

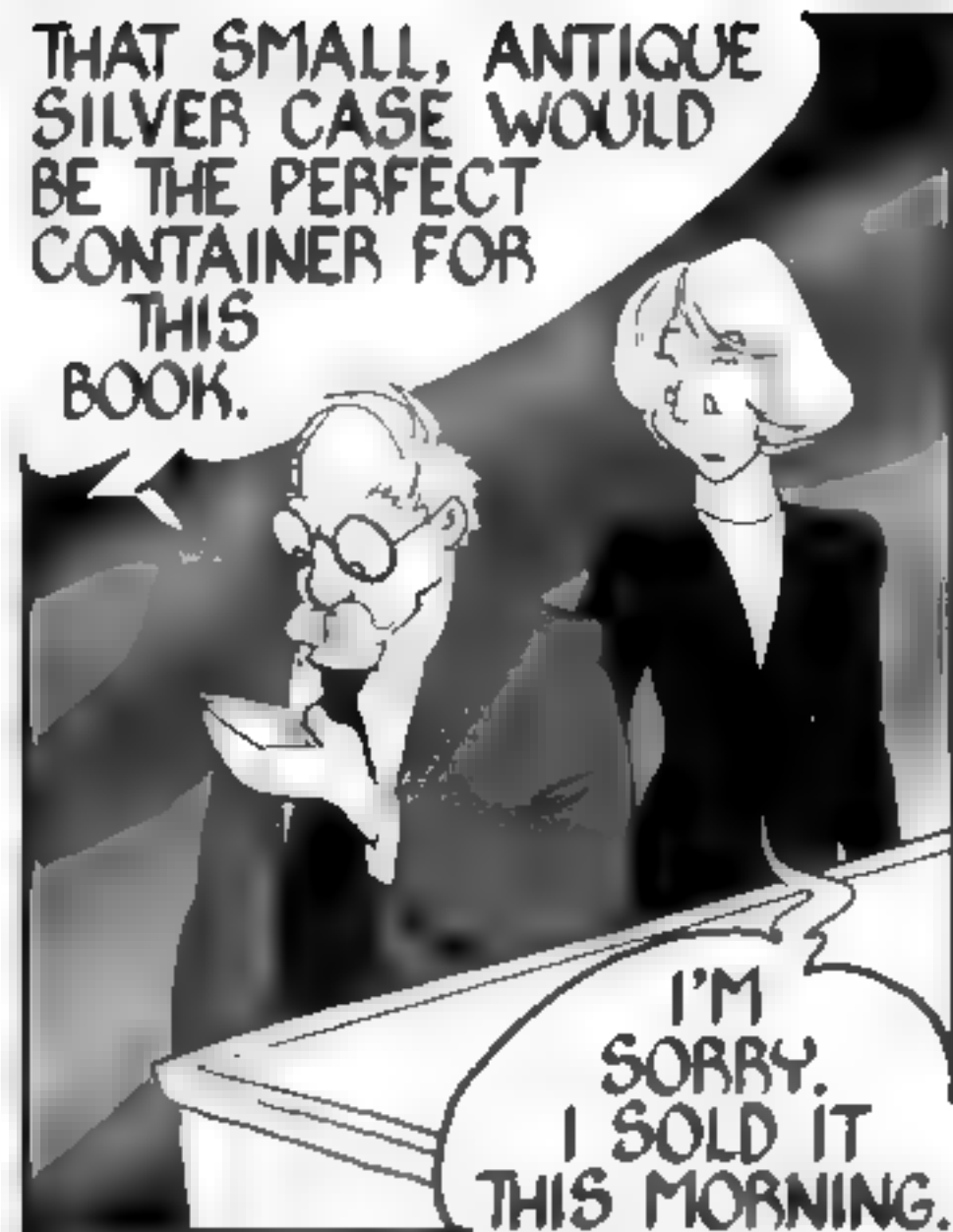


THIS RING.



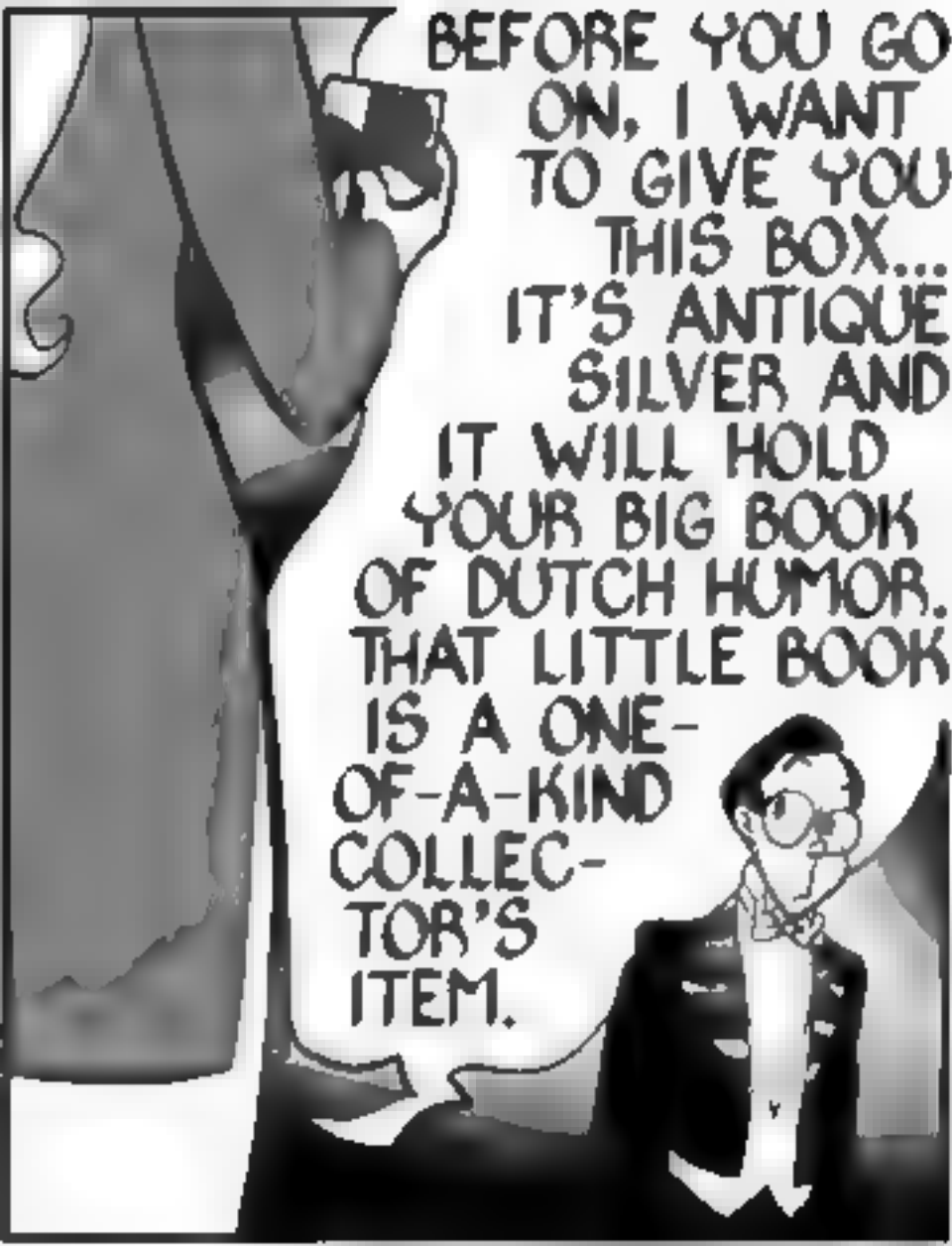
9  
CHICKWEED  
LANE  
®







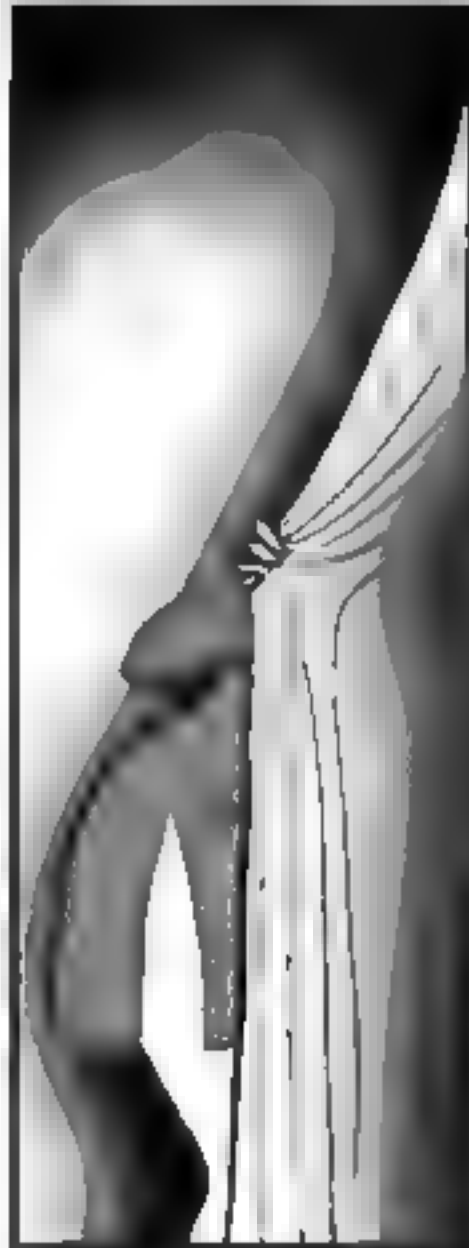




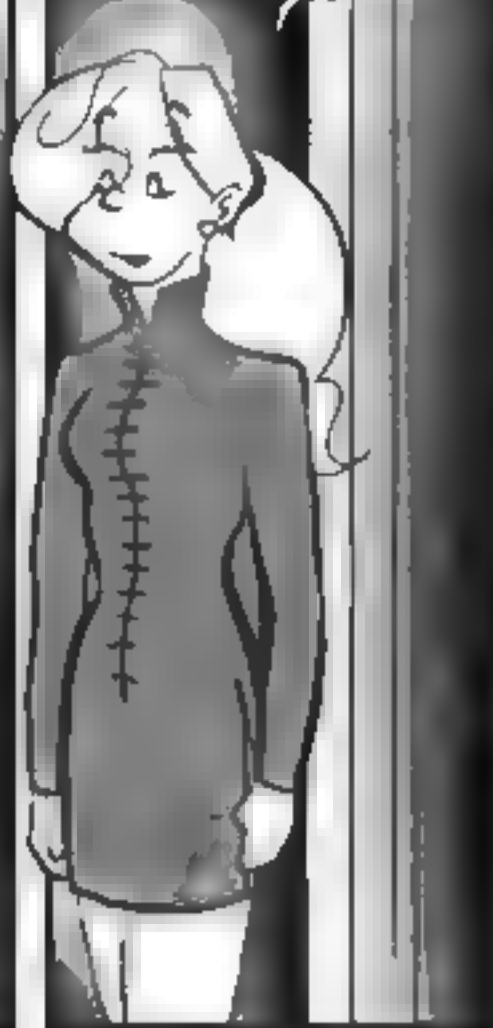
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LET ME GIVE YOU A LITTLE  
GOOD-LUCK KISS WHILE  
NOBODY'S LOOKING.

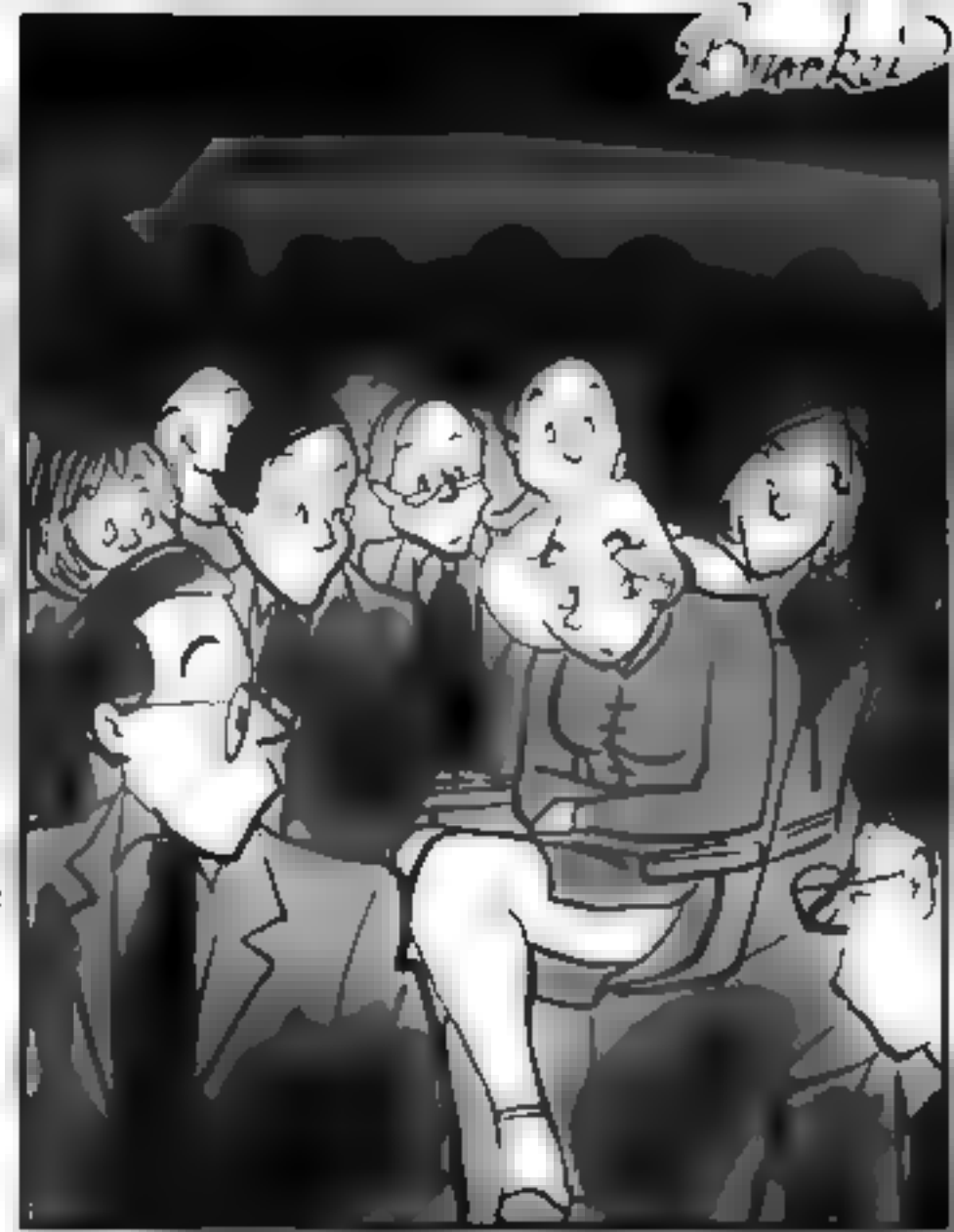


NO ONE WILL  
EVEN KNOW.



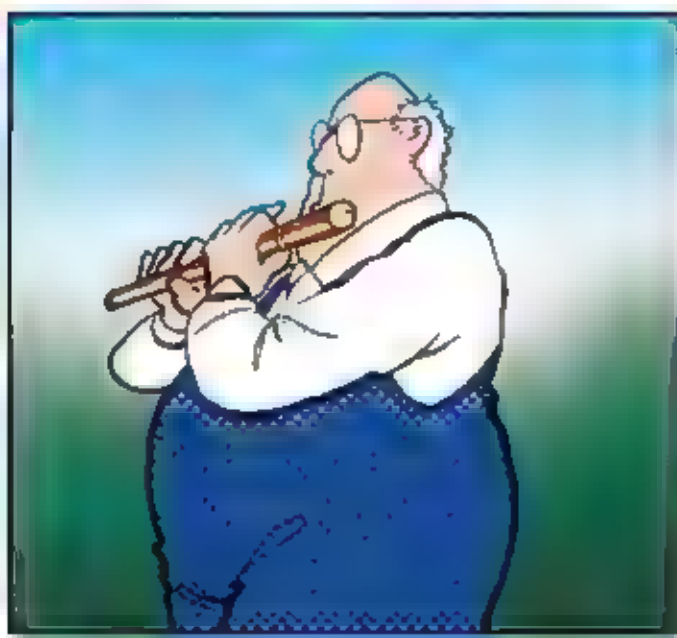
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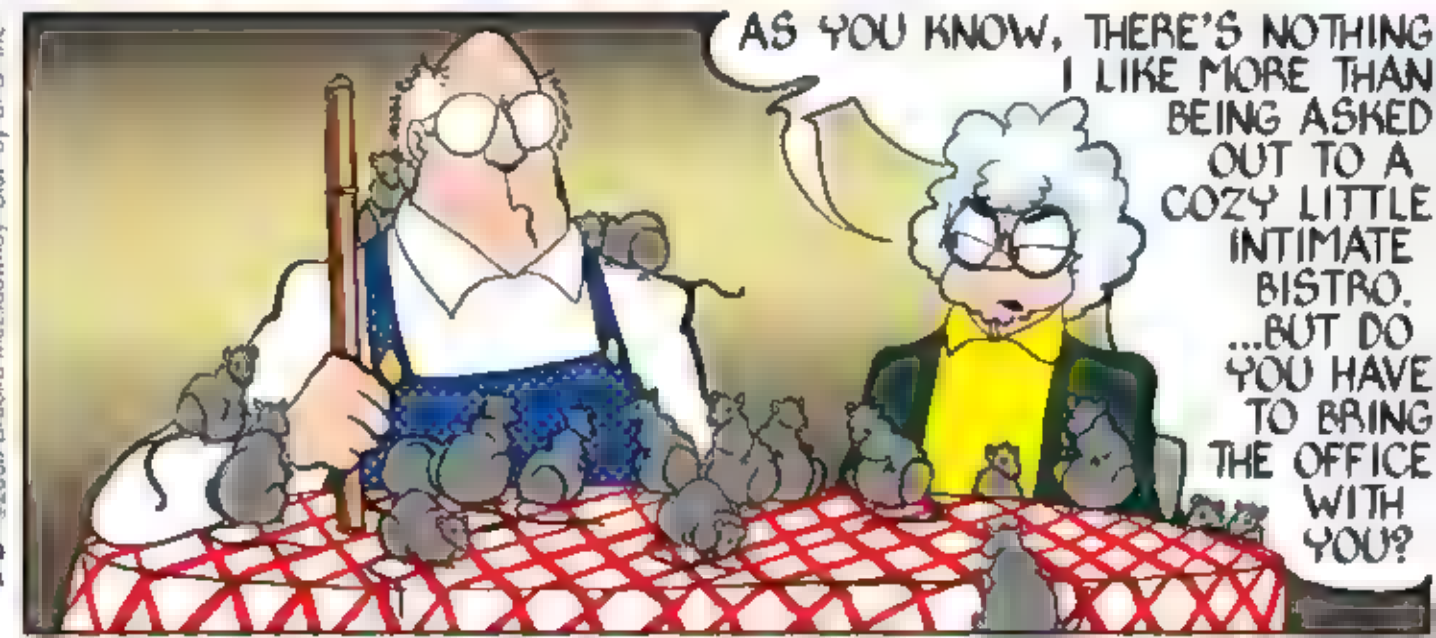


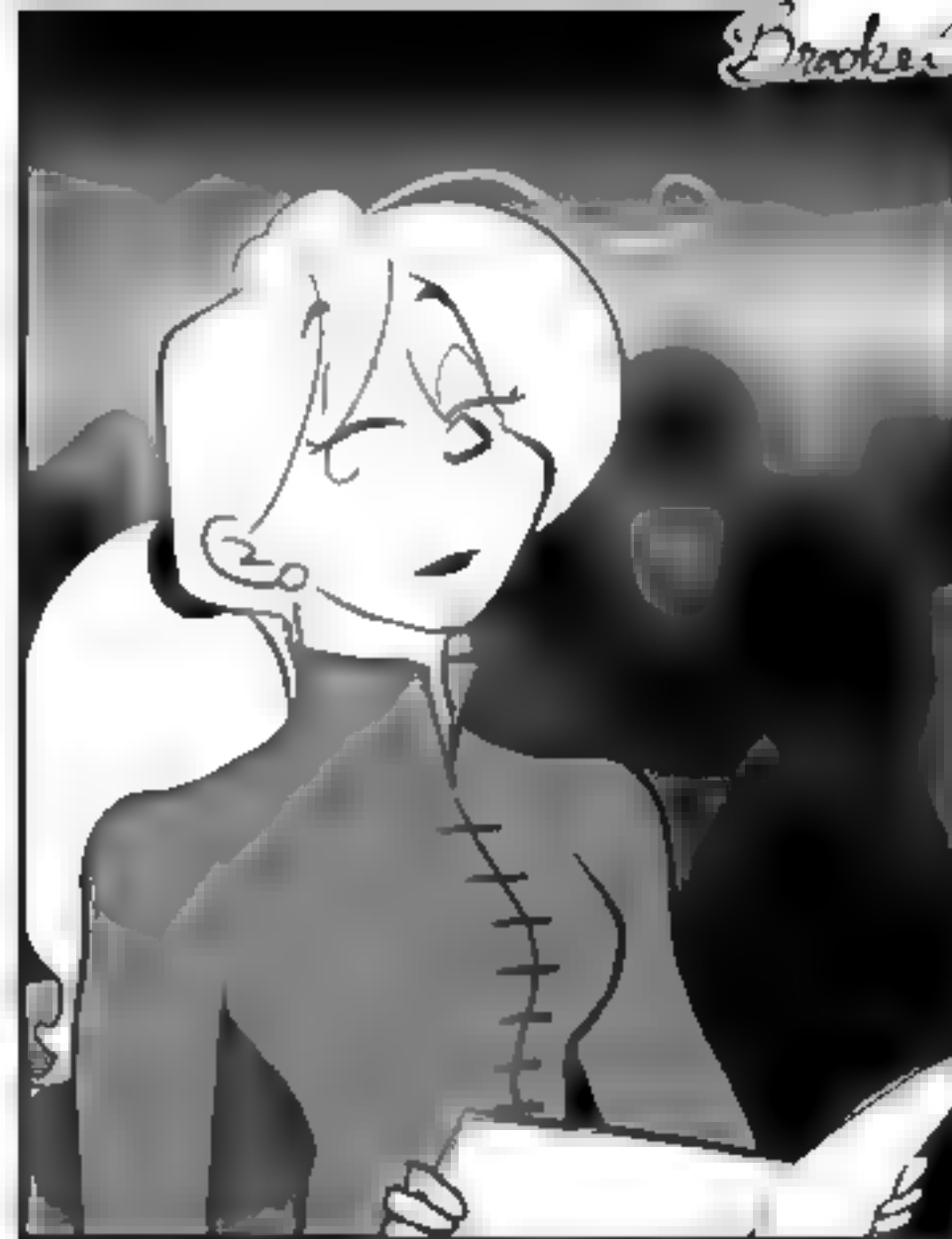
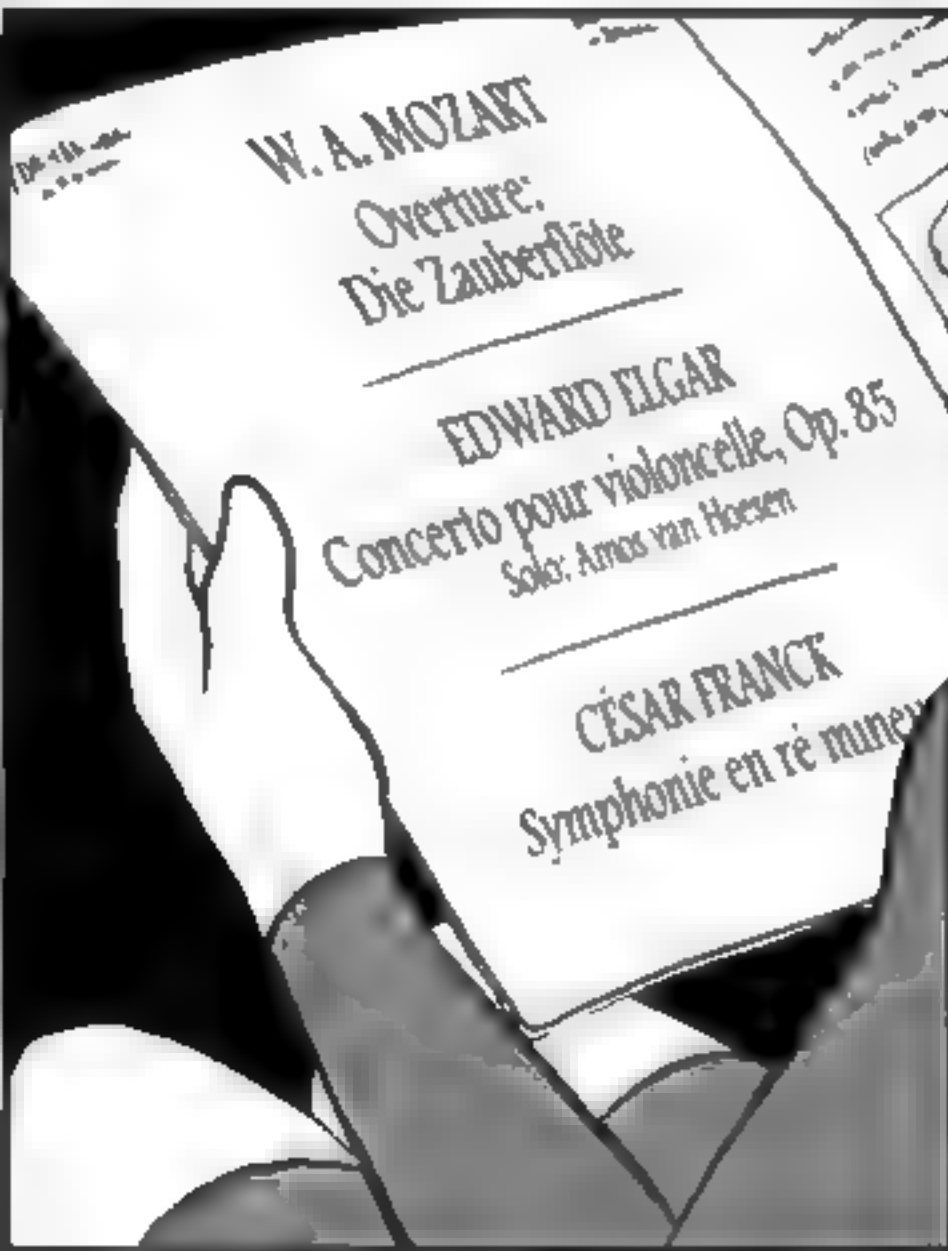






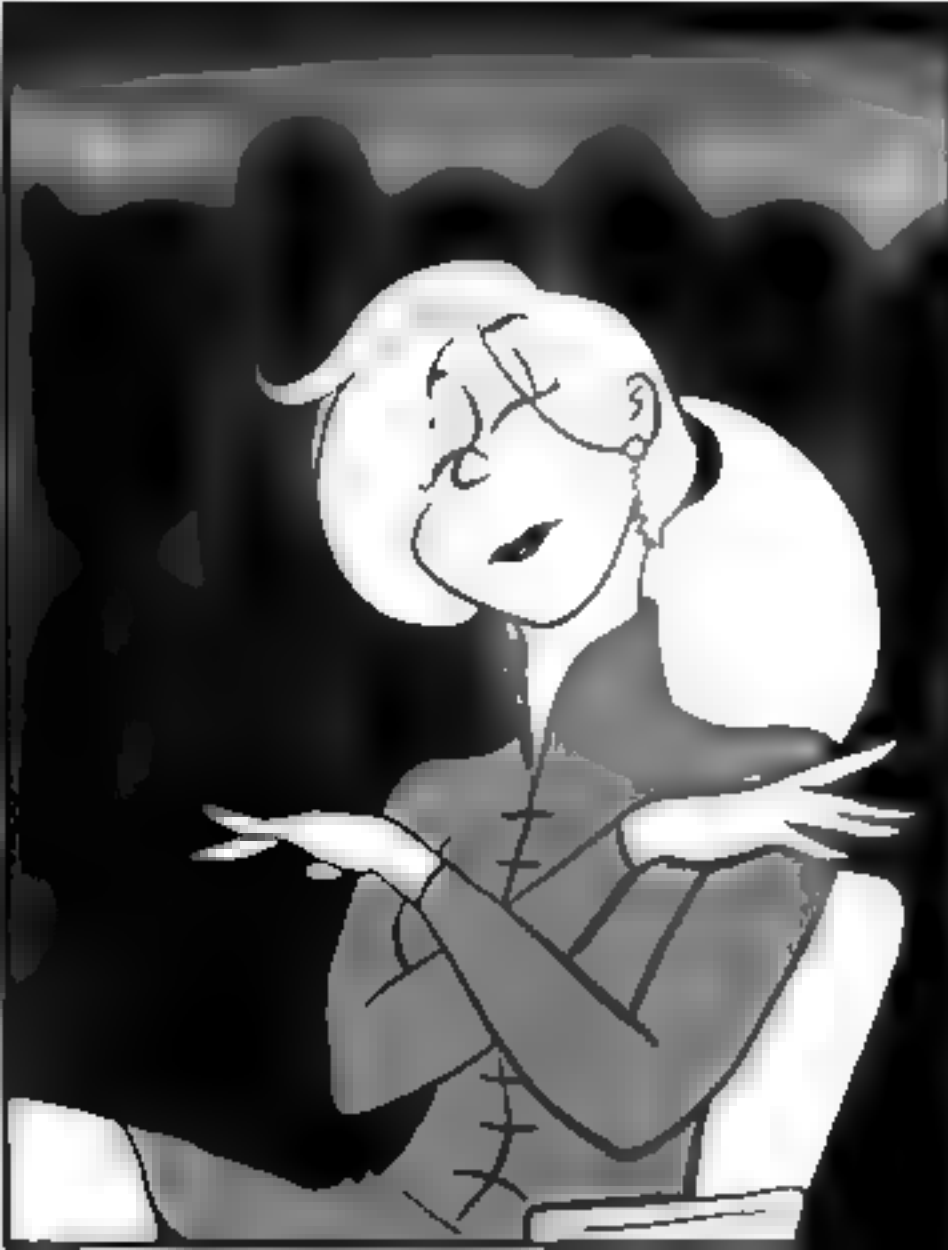
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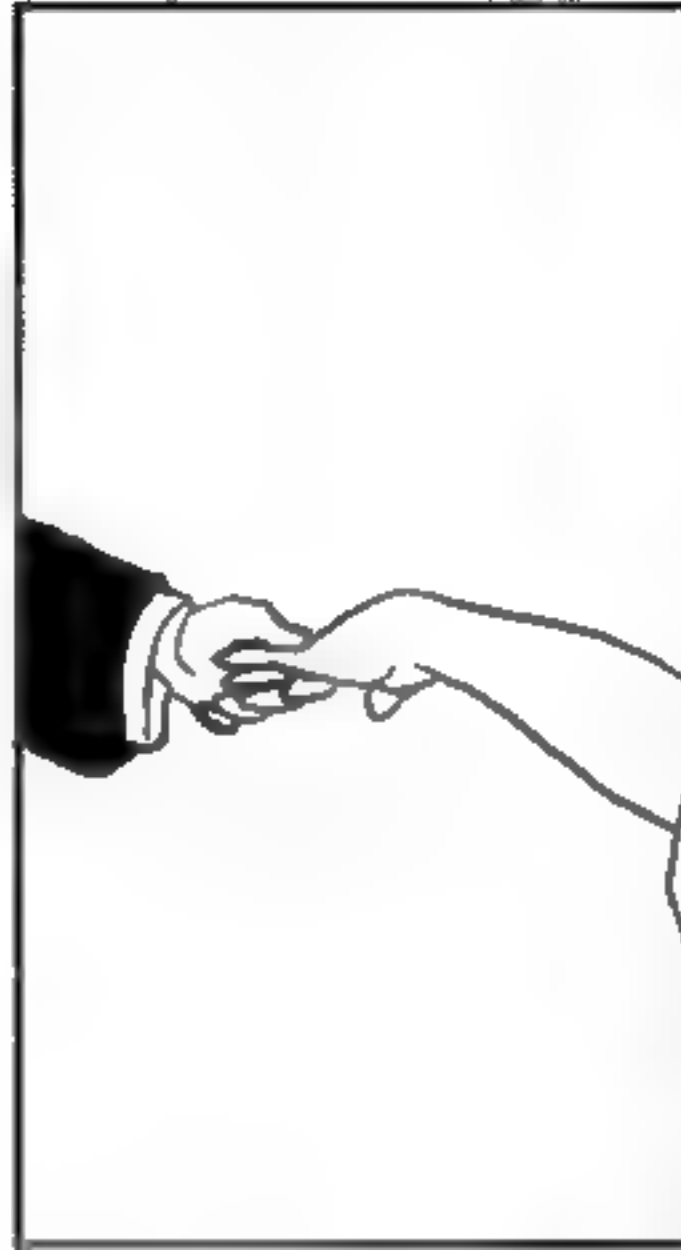








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"DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT WE'D HAVE TO LOOK FORWARD TO IF YOU STAYED MY ACCOMPANIST?...NINE CHANCES OUT OF TEN WE'D BOTH END UP BOOKED TO PLAY SONATAS IN HIGH SCHOOL GYMS."



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WE BOTH KNOW YOU BELONG TO DANCE...IT'S THE THING THAT KEEPS YOU GOING. IF YOU'RE NOT DOING IT, YOU'LL REGRET IT. MAYBE NOT TODAY, MAYBE NOT TOMORROW, BUT SOON AND FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.



I'M NOT GOOD AT BEING NOBLE, BUT IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH TO SEE THAT THE PROBLEMS OF A DANCER AND A CELLIST DON'T AMOUNT TO A HILL OF BEANS IN THIS CRAZY WORLD.



BUT WHAT ABOUT US?

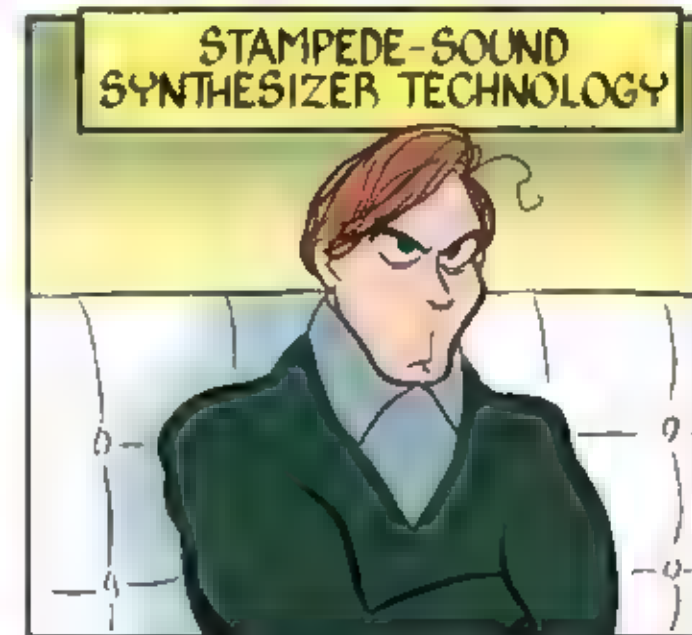
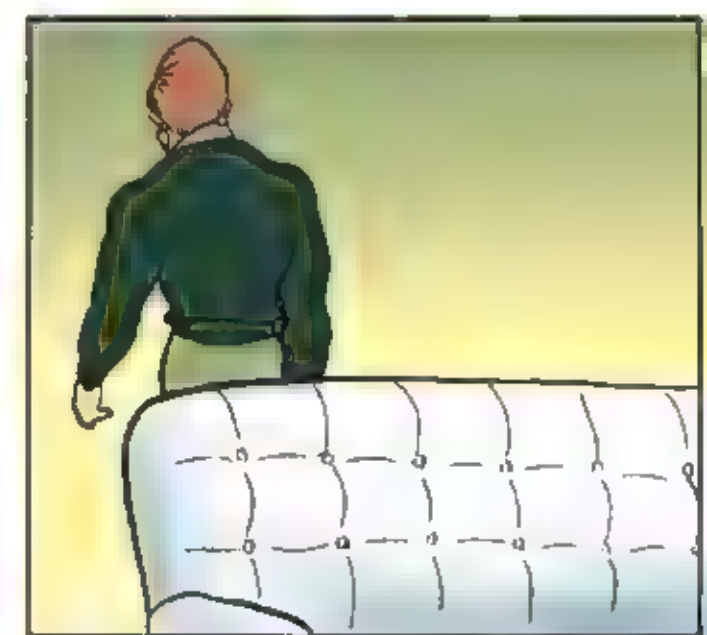
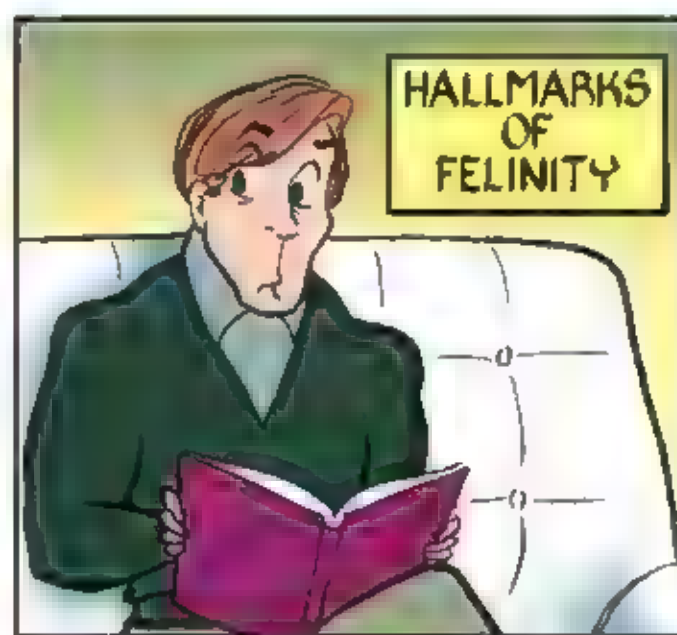
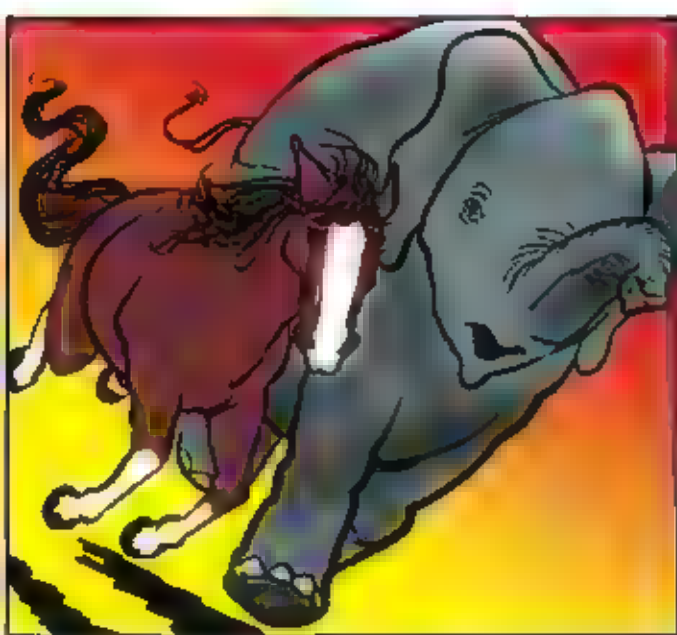
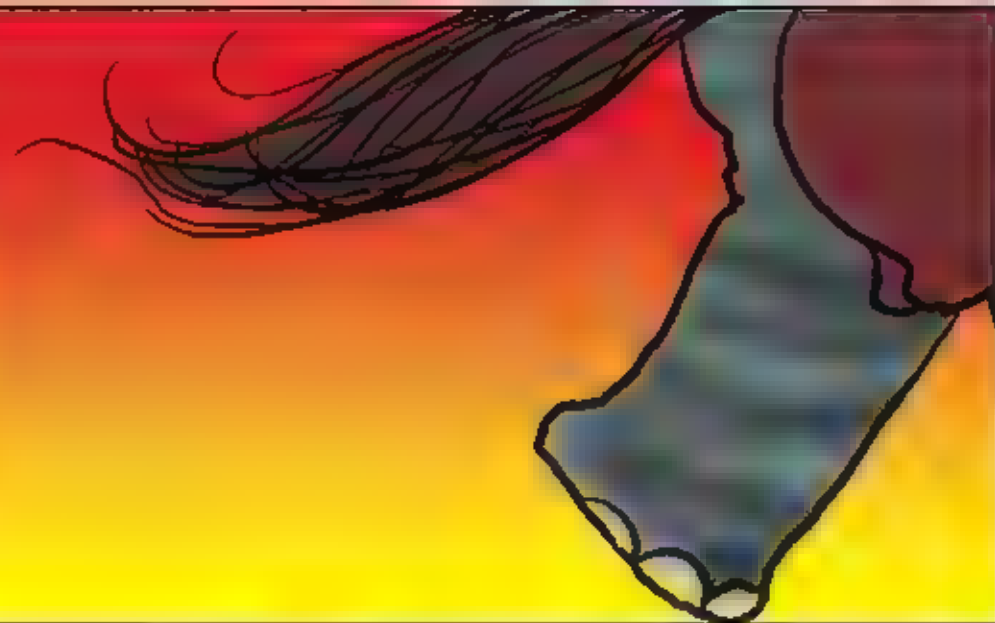
WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE BRUSSELS. WE DIDN'T HAVE IT. BUT YOU CAME TO THE FORRESTIER COMPETITION, AND WE GOT IT...LAST NIGHT, AND THE NIGHT BEFORE THAT, AND THE NIGHT BEFORE THAT, AND THE...







# 9 CHICKWEED LANE





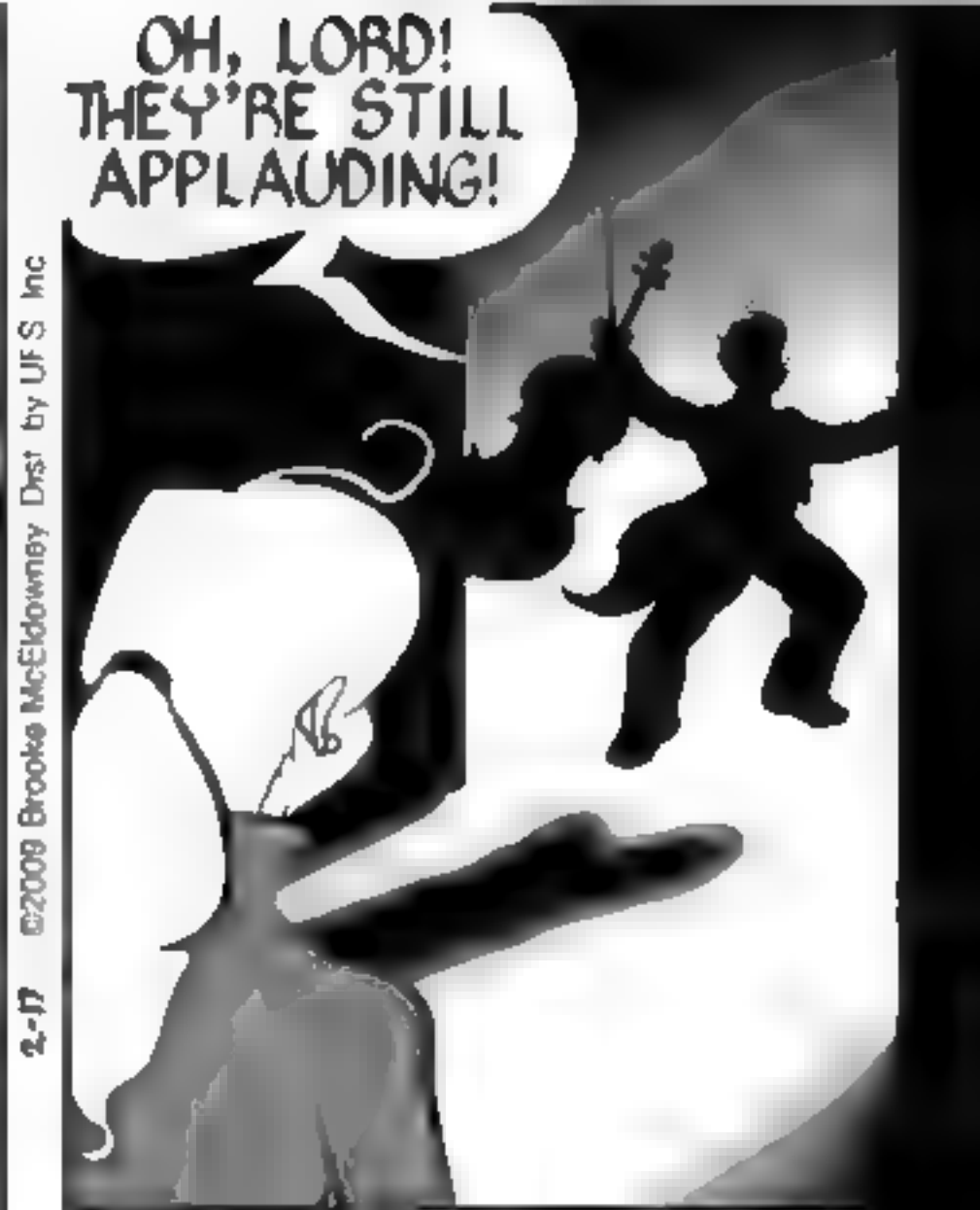
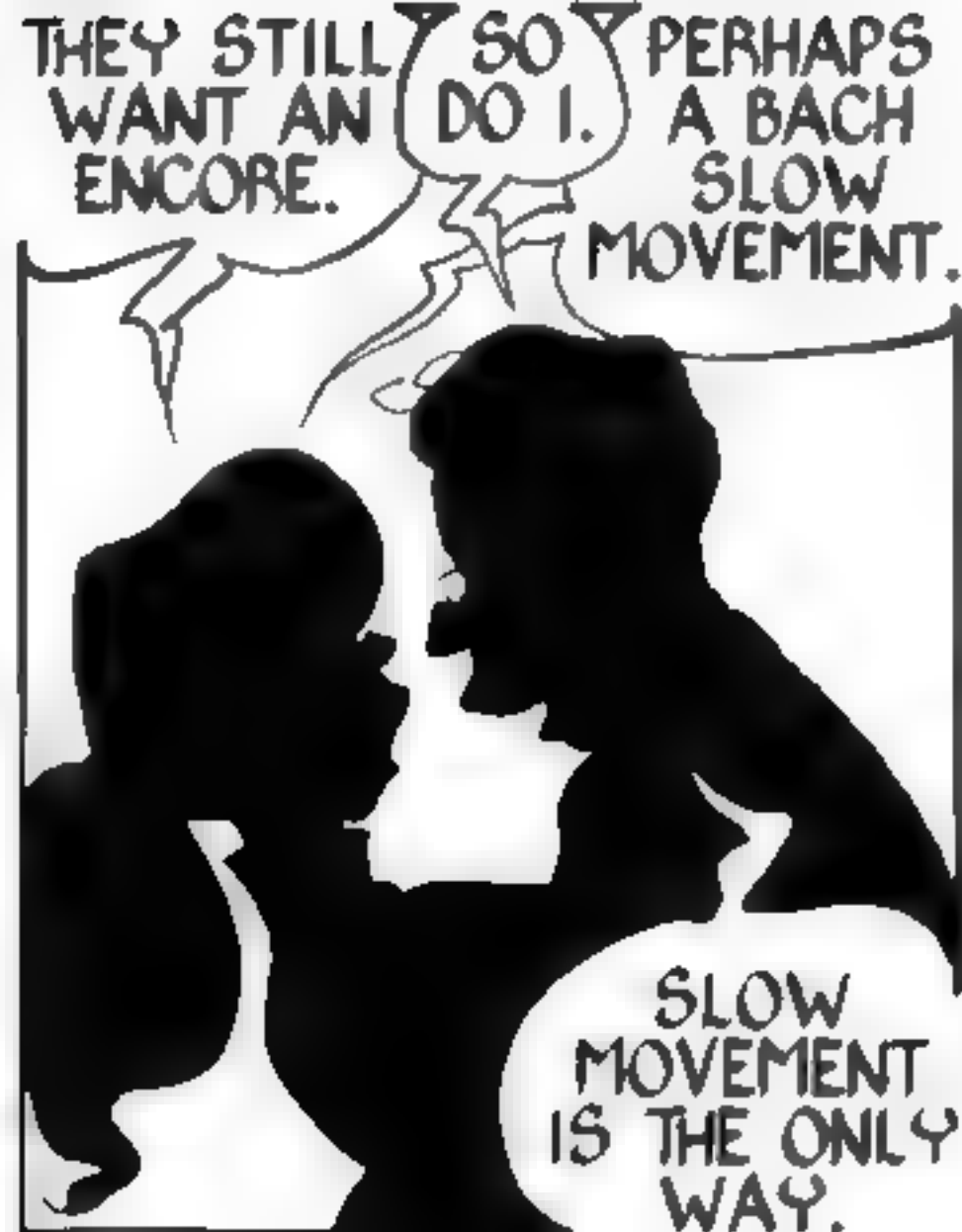
HOW WAS I?

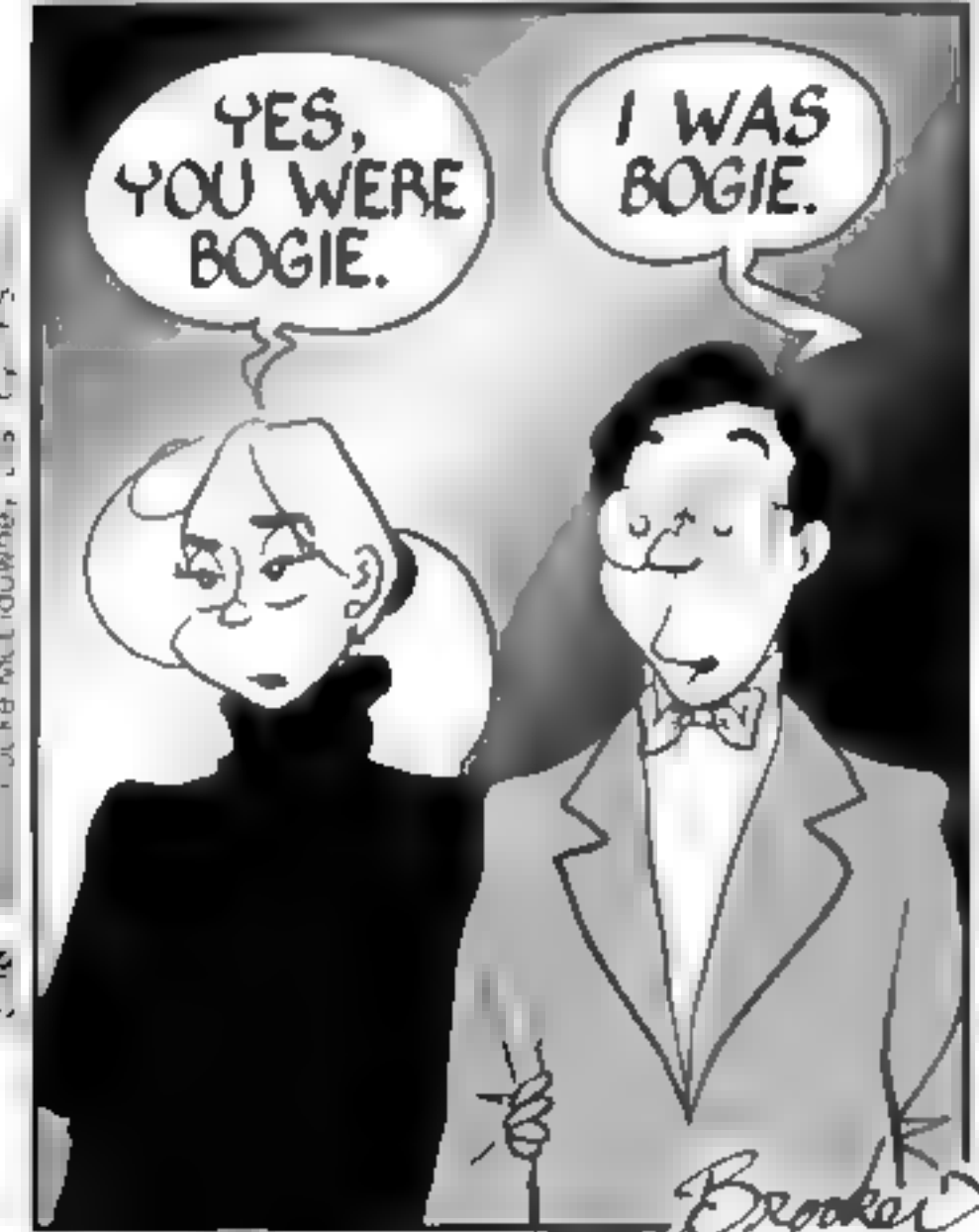
THE AUDIENCE IS STILL APPLAUDING. DO YOU HAVE AN ENCORE?



THAT'S ME APPLAUDING YOU.

AND A STANDING OVATION AT THAT.







SO...YOU  
REALLY  
DREAMT  
OF ME AS  
HUMPHREY  
BOGART?

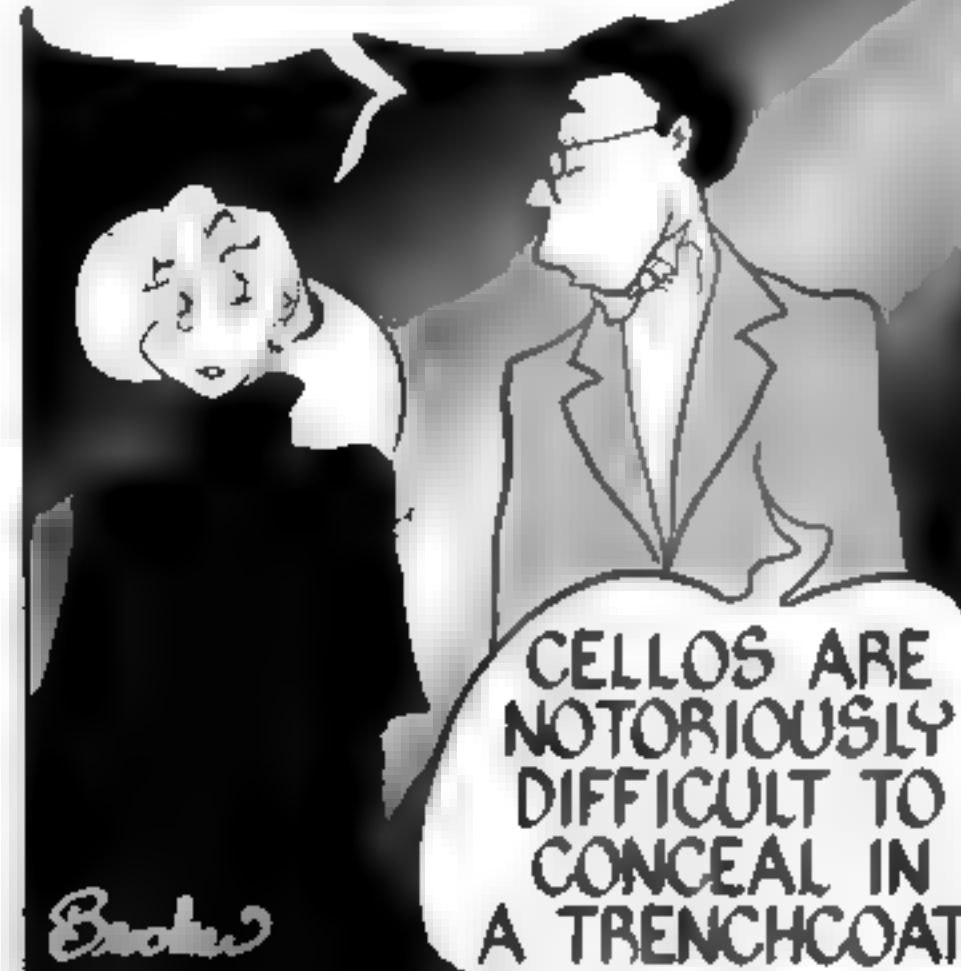
I WASN'T  
SNOOZING.  
IT WAS MORE  
AS IF MY MIND  
WANDERED  
FAR AWAY.



PUT DOWN THE PHONE,  
STRASSER! THIS IS A 1739  
MATTEO GOFFRILLER CELLO,  
AND I'M NOT  
AFRAID TO  
USE IT!



CURIOUSLY, I DON'T BELIEVE  
BOGART EVER UTTERED  
THAT LINE IN  
"CASABLANCA."



WHAT BOTHERS ME IS THAT  
YOU SPEAK AS ONE WHO  
KNOWS FROM PERSONAL  
EXPERIENCE.



THE STRANGE THING IS THAT  
IN MY "CASABLANCA" SCENE  
I WAS ABOUT TO PULL OUT  
YOUR .38 AND NAIL VICTOR  
LASZLO BETWEEN THE EYES.  
(ILSA ALWAYS WAS AN  
IDIOT...ASK ANY WOMAN.)



AND  
DID  
YOU?

YOU SAID, "HERE'S  
LOOKING AT YOU,  
KID," THE AUDIENCE  
STARTED CHEERING,  
AND I CAME OUT  
OF MY REVERIE.



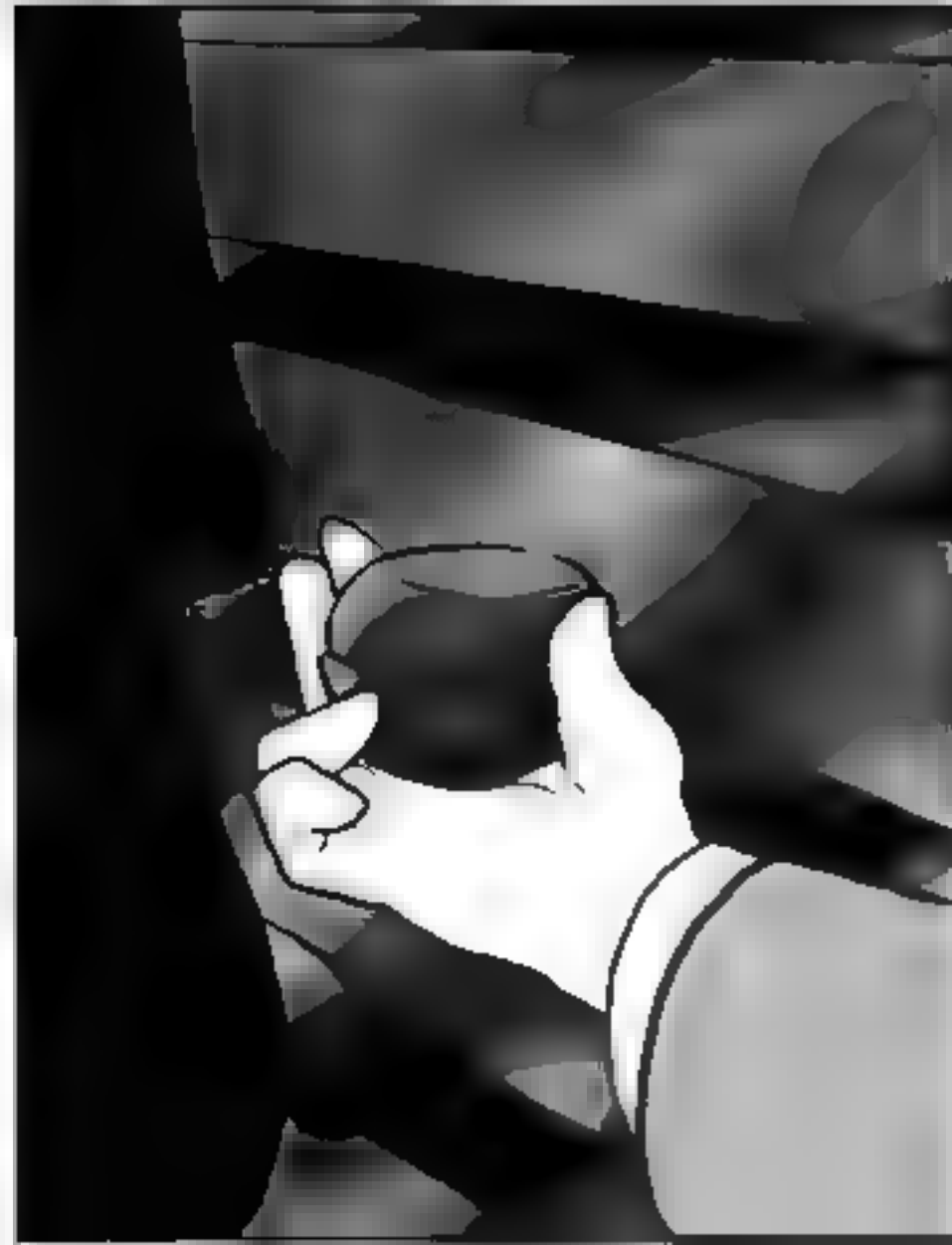
IS THAT A .38 CALIBER  
SMITH & WESSON ANTI-  
PERSONNEL DEVICE IN YOUR  
COAT POCKET? OR ARE YOU  
JUST HAPPY TO IMAGINE  
I'M INGRID BERGMAN?

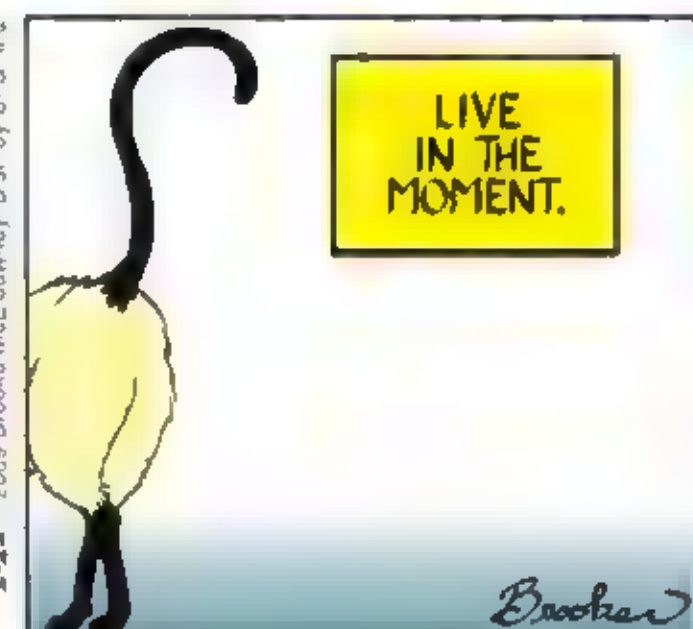
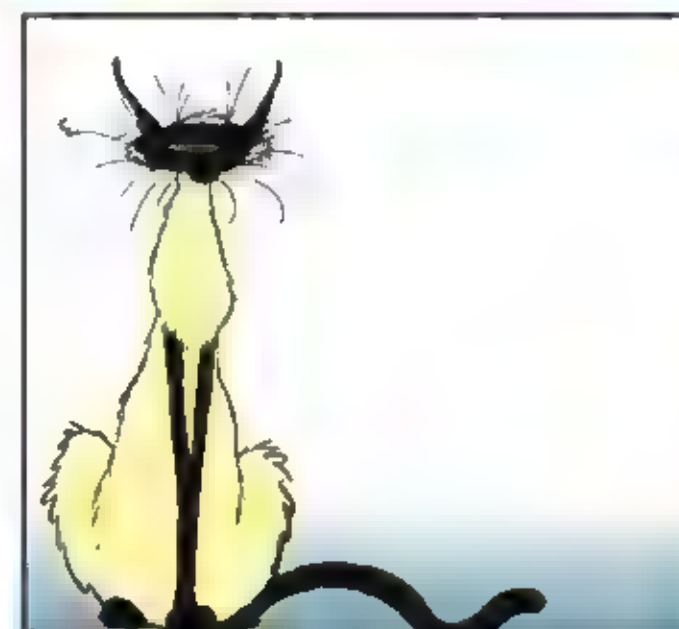
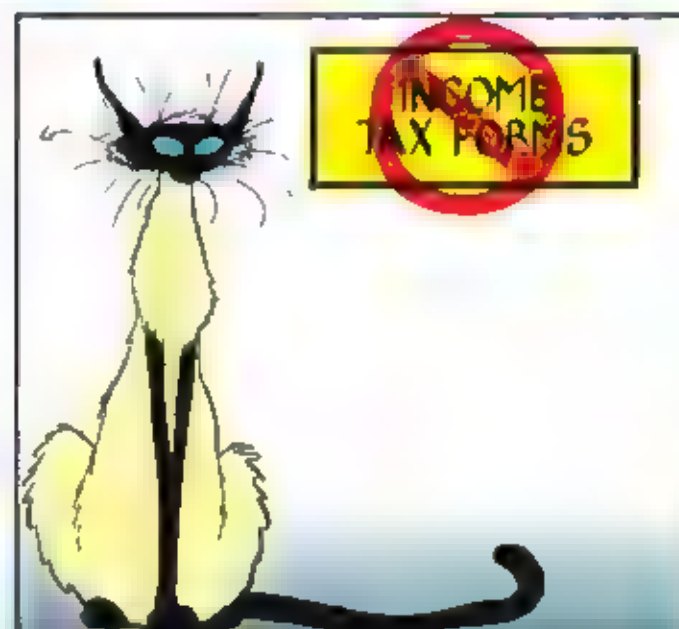
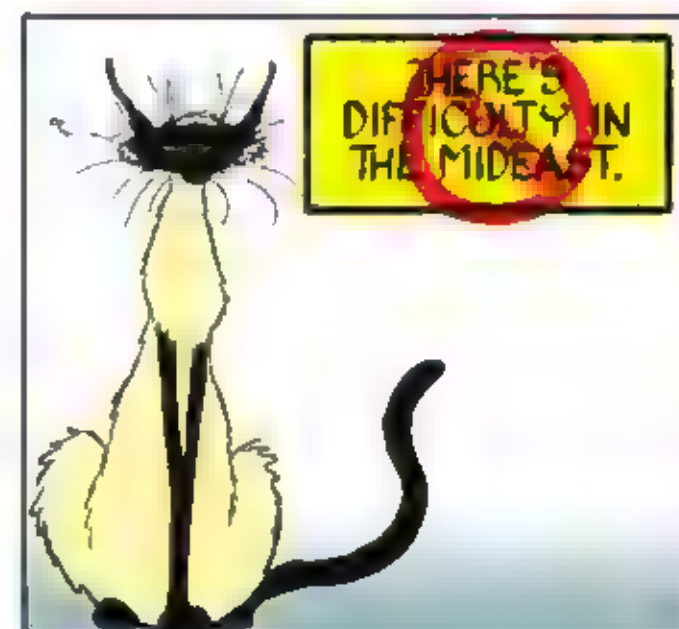
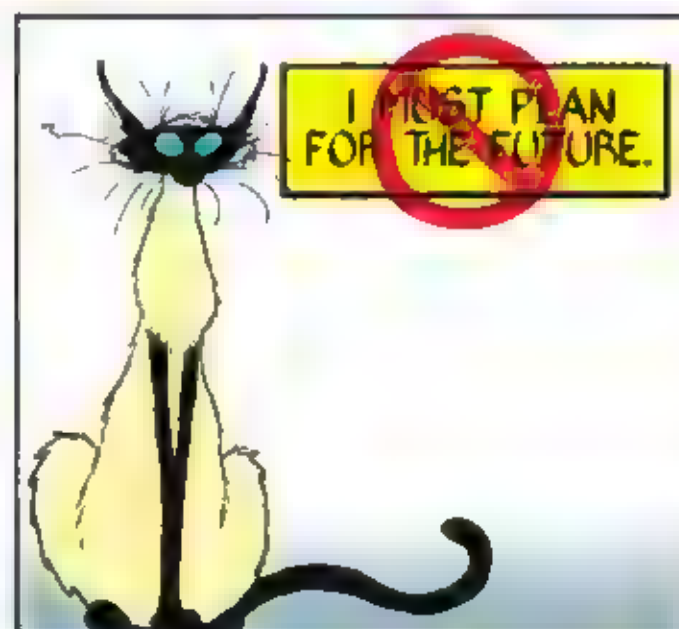


WELL,  
ACTUALLY...



Brooke









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I DIDN'T TELL YOU EVERY-  
THING ABOUT MY REVERIE  
AT YOUR CONCERT. IT  
ENDED WITH RICK'S SPEECH  
FROM "CASABLANCA," WHEN  
HE TELLS ILSA SHE MUST  
GO WITH VICTOR.



EXCEPT, YOU WERE RICK,  
AND YOU WERE TELLING  
ME I MUST REMAIN A  
DANCER, THAT I'D REGRET  
IT IF I GAVE IT UP.  
AND YOU SEEMED  
TO KNOW ME SO  
WELL, AND TO  
KNOW THAT  
I COULDN'T  
STAY WITH  
YOU.



...AND NOW  
YOU SHOW UP  
WITH THAT  
RING CASE.

LET ME  
PUT  
THE RING  
ON YOUR  
FINGER.



IF YOU PUT  
THE RING ON MY  
FINGER, I MIGHT  
SAY NO...AND I  
MIGHT SAY  
YES.

EITHER WAY,  
I'M GOING TO  
HURT YOU.

...LET ME  
PUT THE  
RING ON YOUR  
FINGER.



*Brooke*



YOU KNOW WHAT I'M LIKE,  
HOW I TREATED YOU JUST  
BECAUSE YOU ADMIRERD  
HILARY HAHN.  
I'M A JEALOUS, INSECURE  
BLUE BLAZING, BEASTLY  
B...



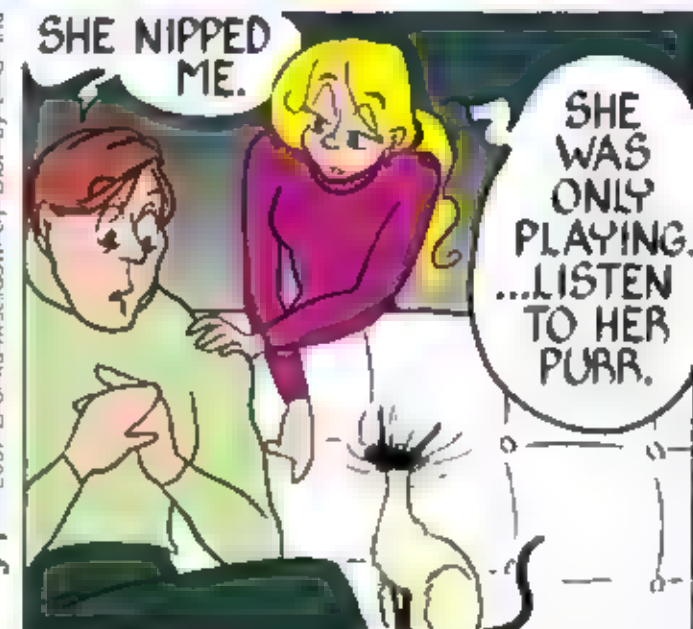
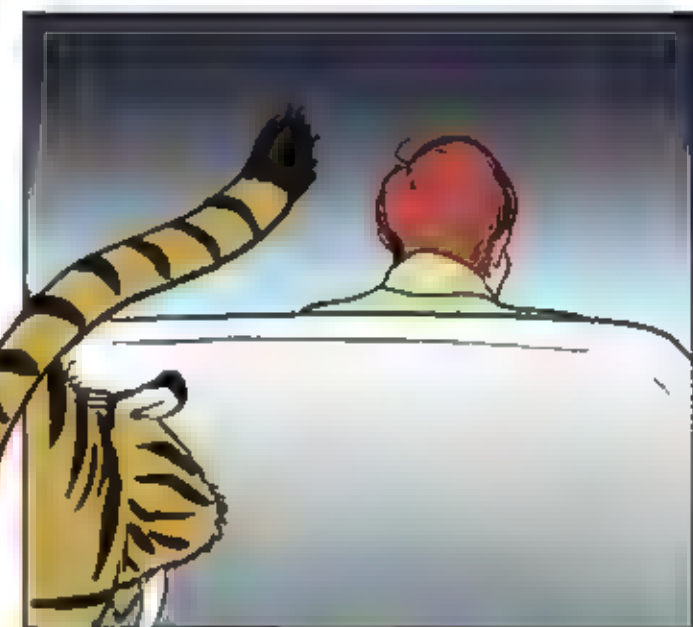
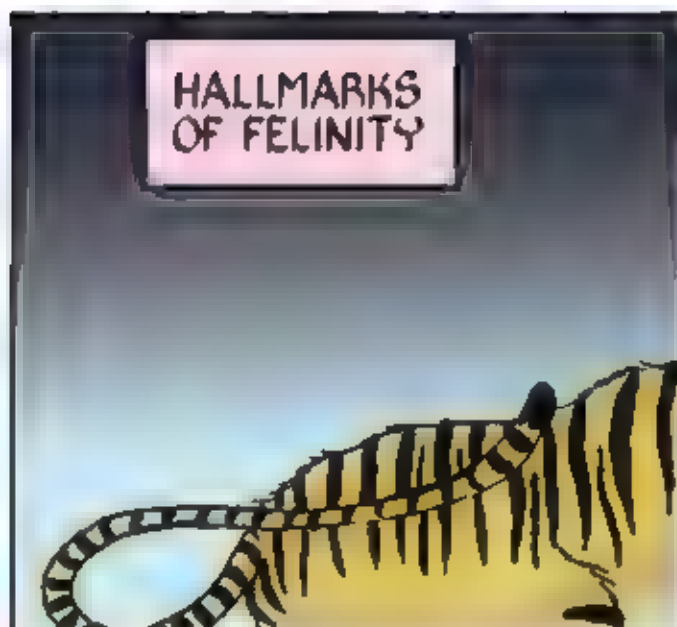
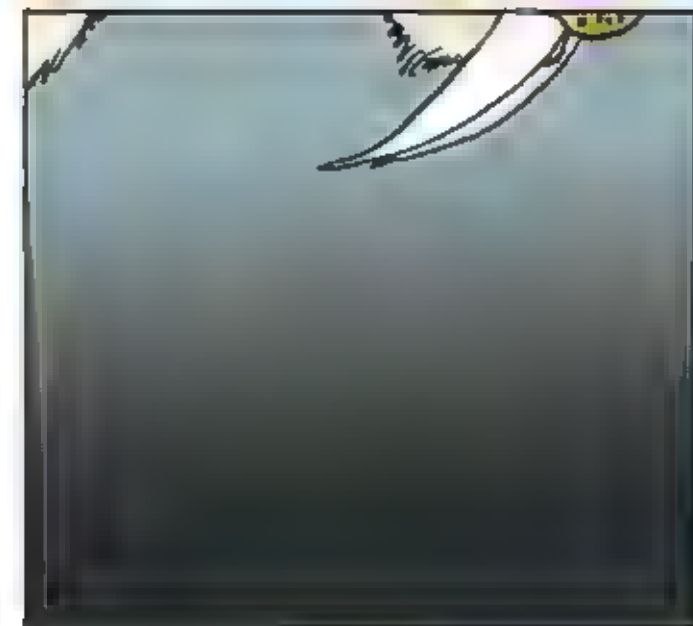
HOW CAN YOU  
KISS ME WHEN  
MY MOUTH IS  
OVERFLOWING  
WITH  
INVECTIVE?

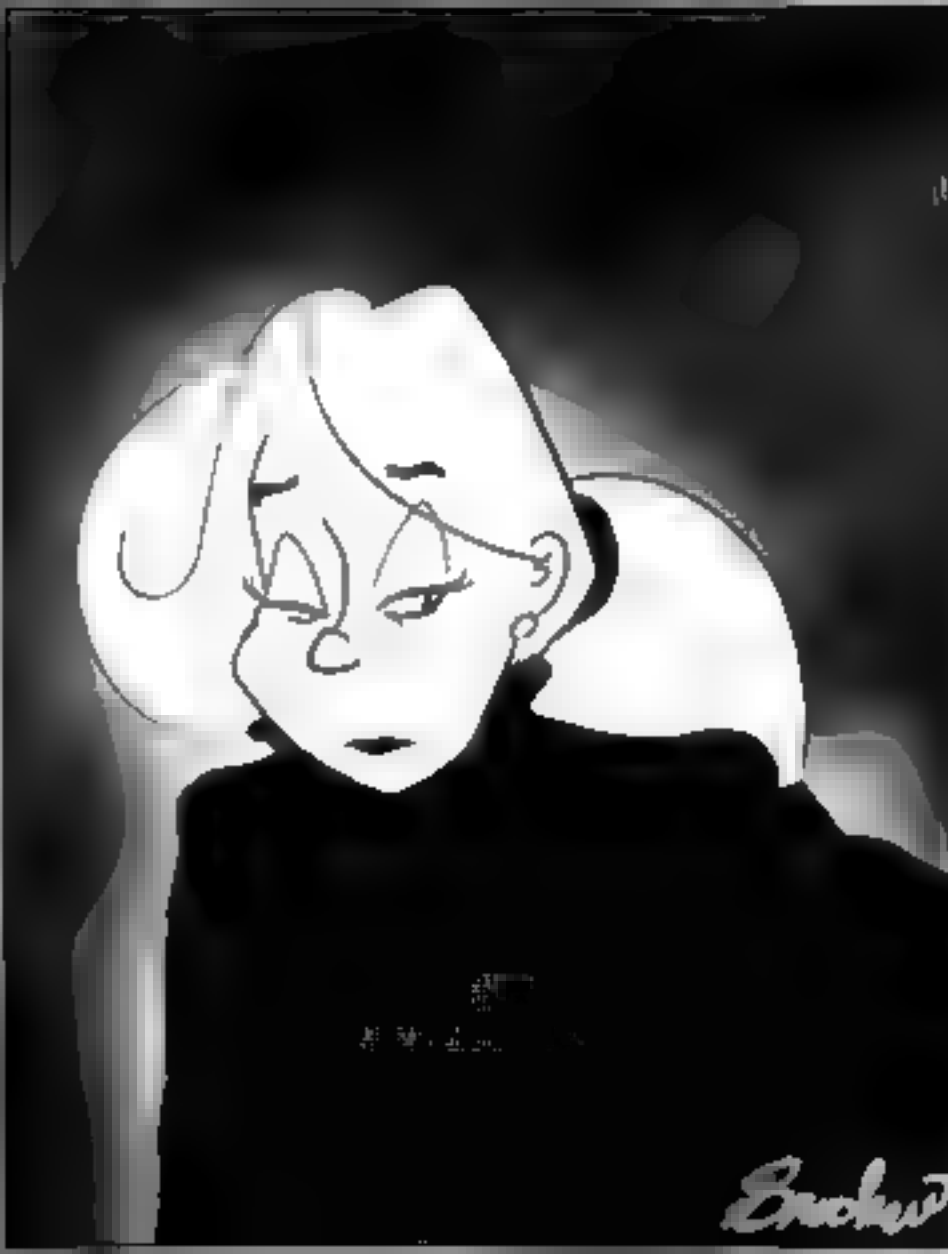
IT MAY  
SOUND BAD,  
BUT IT FEELS  
WONDERFUL.



Brooke











I THOUGHT YOU'D WANT TO PUT THIS WITH THAT LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE SECRET DECODER BADGE YOUR GRANDMOTHER GAVE YOU, AND ALL THOSE ANTIQUE CEREAL BOX TOYS.



Barker

I WAS SURE YOU WERE GIVING ME ANOTHER KIND OF RING.



IT SEEMED UNNECESSARY. WE...THE TWO OF US...ARE INEVITABLE.

YOU MAKE EVERY DAY OF MY LIFE EDGY AND FUN AND AGGRAVATING AND ROMANTIC AND ALLURING. THAT RING IS MY PROMISE.



WHEN WE'RE READY, WE'LL KNOW...CAN WE JUST PLEDGE THAT?

IT'S MAKING MY PINKY TURN BLUE. I GUESS I'D BETTER SAY YES.



YAY.

THIS ALL STARTED WITH  
HILARY HAHN'S RECITAL  
IN NEW YORK. SOME DAY,  
IF WE MEET, I'M GOING  
TO THANK  
HER.

YOU  
DIDN'T  
LOOK AT  
THE  
SECRET  
MESSAGE  
IN YOUR  
RING.



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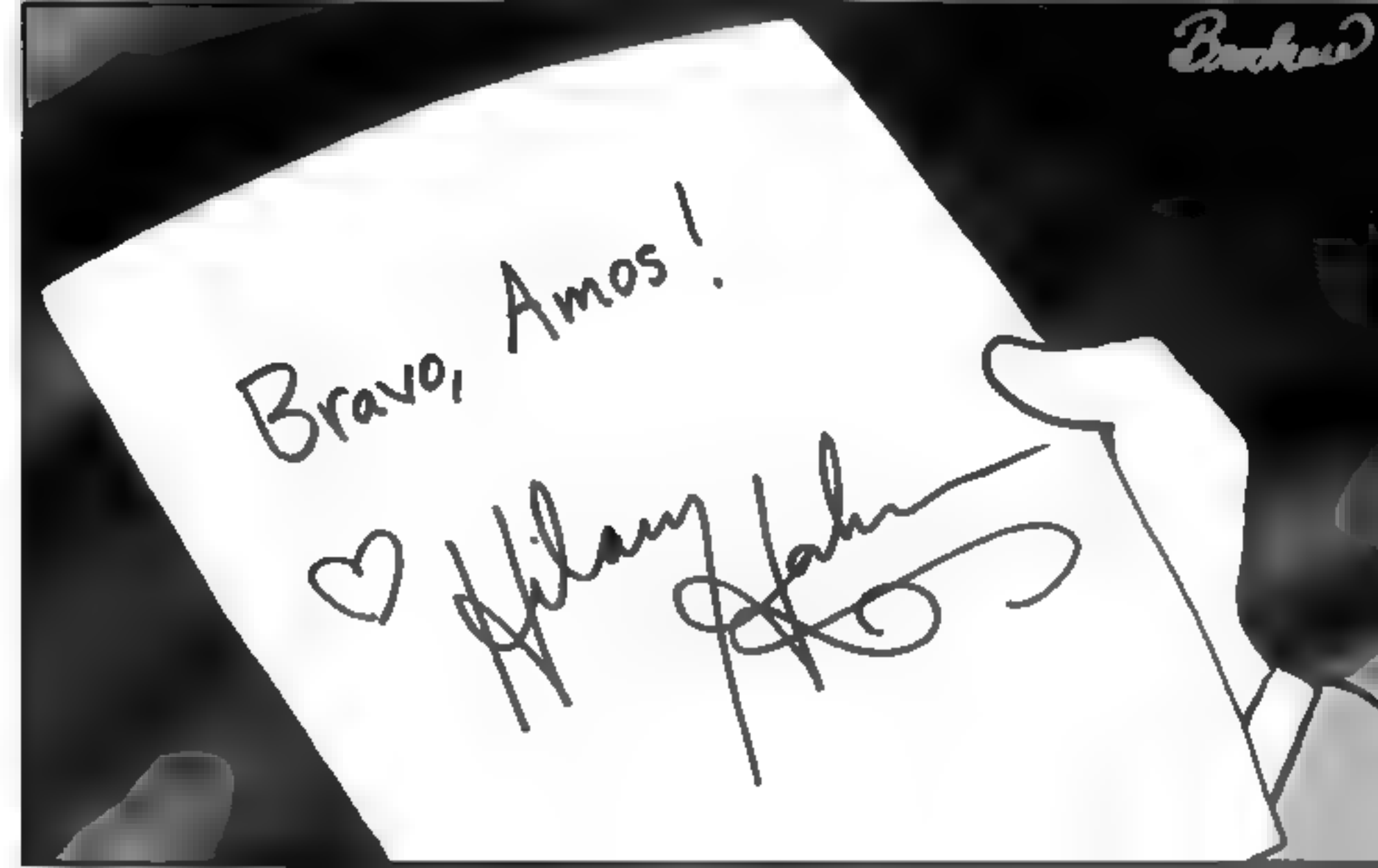
"hic"



Engelstein







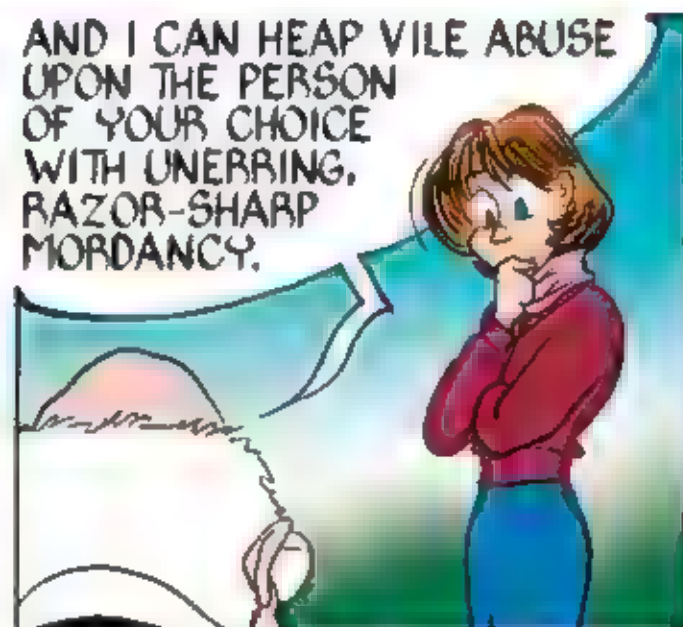
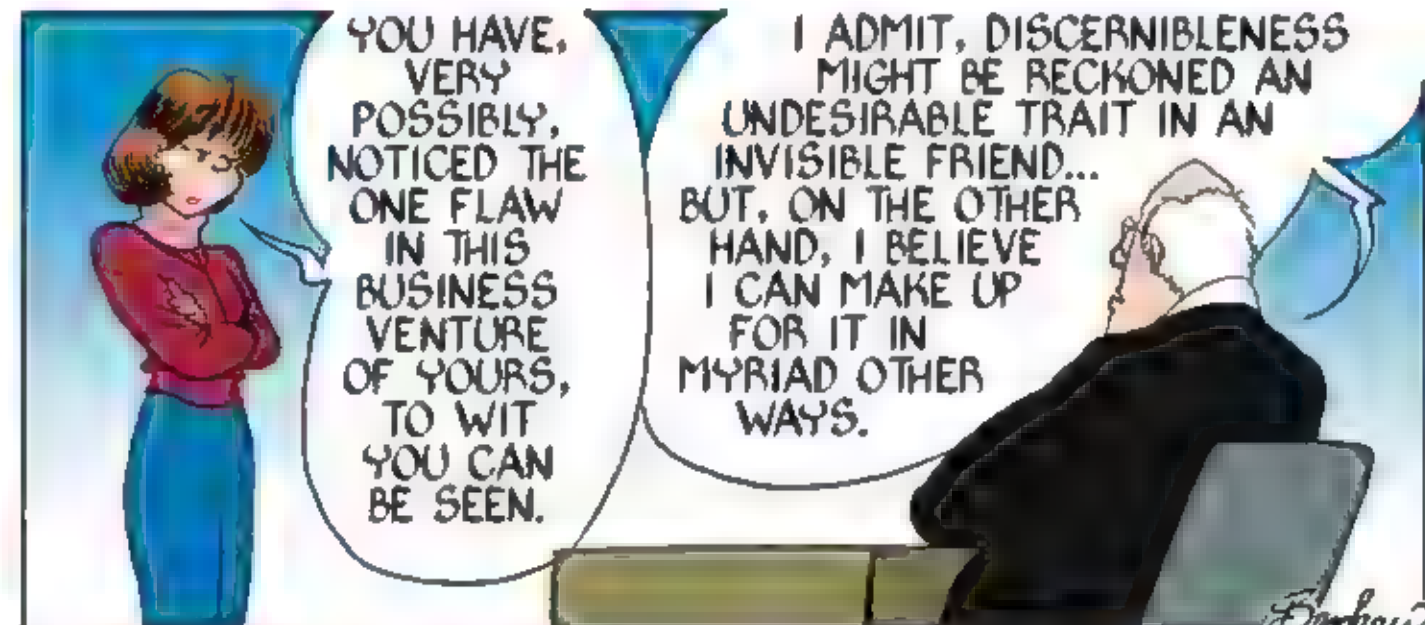
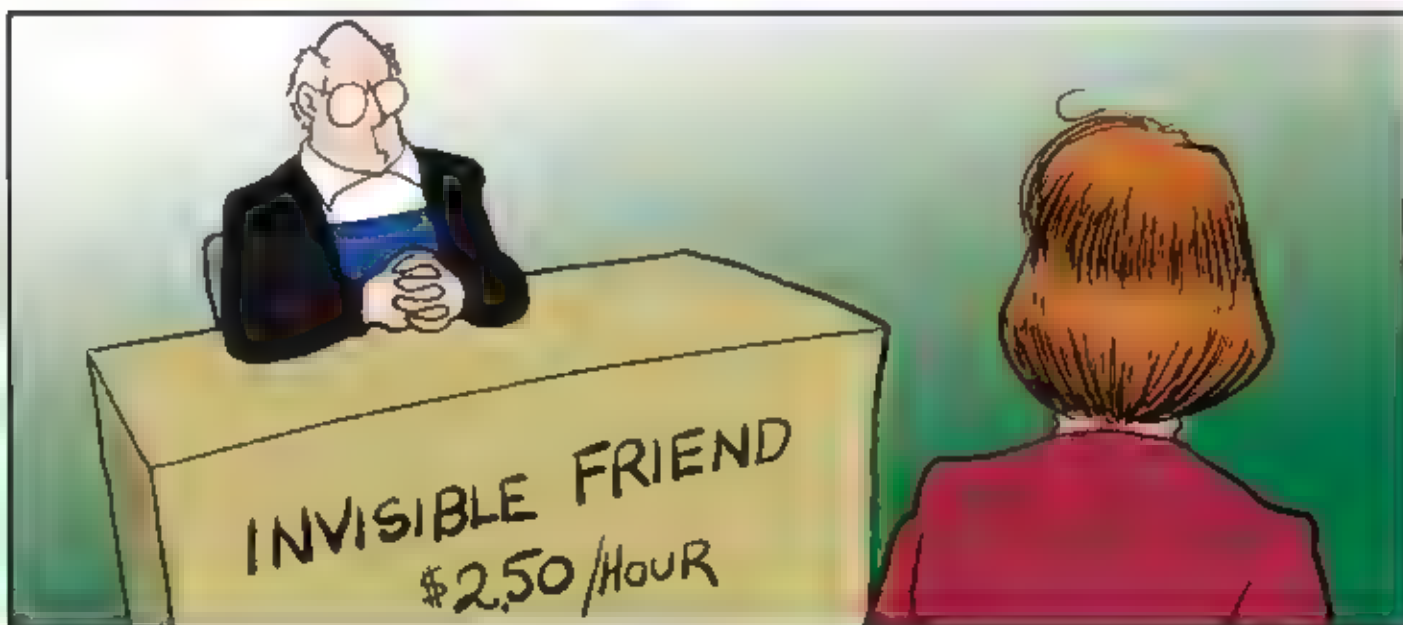


INVISIBLE

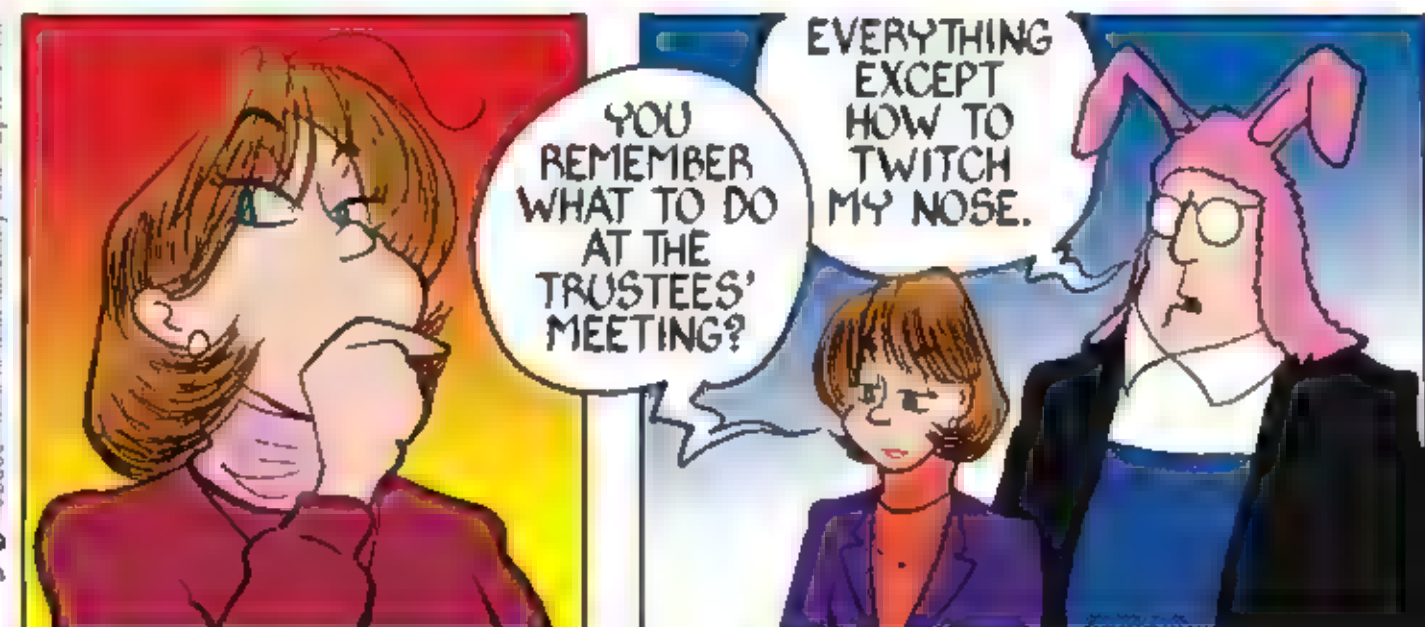
\$2.50

FRIEND

/Hour



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I LOVE MY RING, AND  
I LOVE YOU...AND I'M IN  
THIS THING WITH YOU FOR  
THE LONG HAUL.



...AND, WHY  
ARE YOU  
SWEATING?



I'M NOT  
SWEATING.



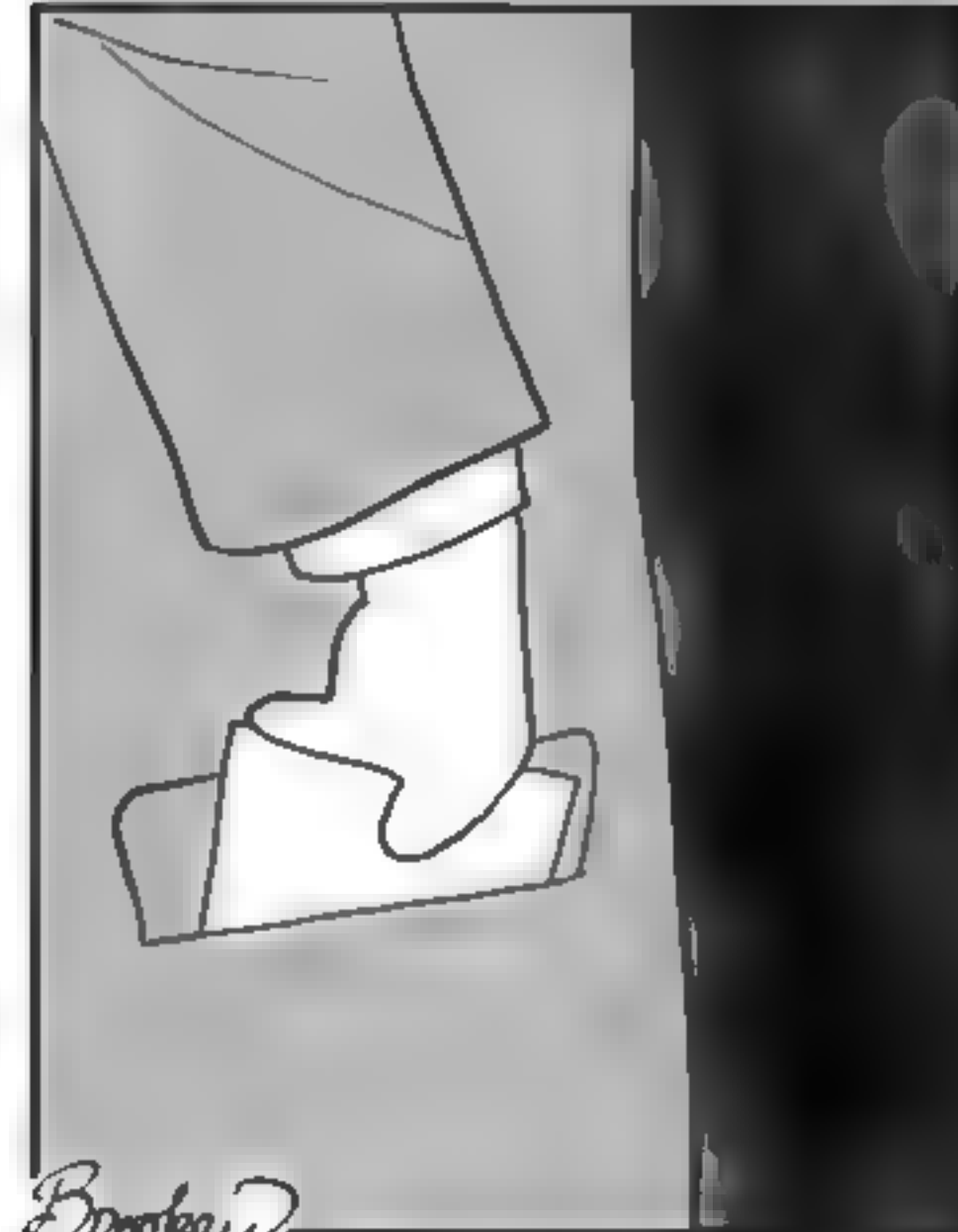
OKAY, SWEETIE.  
DID I MENTION THAT  
I LOVE YOU?



AMOS, NOW YOU'RE  
GIVING OFF STEAM.







THE FACT IS, I SORT  
OF PANICKED, AND HID  
IT FROM YOU  
IN MY  
POCKET.

BECAUSE YOU  
FEARED I MIGHT  
ERUPT LIKE A SELFISH,  
JEALOUS LITTLE  
TERMAGANT, SPEWING  
RADIOACTIVE WASTE  
FROM EVERY PORE,  
BEFOULING THE  
ATMOSPHERE AND  
BEING A SCOURGE  
TO THE PLANET  
AT LARGE?  
IS THAT WHAT  
YOU THOUGHT?

THE IDEA MIGHT HAVE...  
...LIGHTLY...FLITTED THROUGH  
MY MIND.

REMEMBER HOW SWEET  
YOU THINK IT IS THAT  
I CAN'T LIE TO YOU?

SO YOU GOT A WONDERFUL  
PERSONAL NOTE FROM  
HILARY HAHN, AND KEPT  
QUIET ABOUT IT RATHER  
THAN TELL ME.



THAT MEANS YOU  
HAVEN'T GOTTEN TO  
YELL "WOW" YET?



WELL, DON'T YOU THINK YOU  
SHOULD BE YELLING "WOW"  
BEFORE AN INTERNAL  
ORGAN RUPTURES?



SO YOU REALLY  
DON'T MIND  
THIS  
NOTE?



IT SAYS "BRAVO, AMOS!" AND IS  
INSCRIBED WITH A LITTLE, IF  
SLIGHTLY PROVOCATIVE,  
HEART.



I COULDN'T  
HAVE SAID  
IT BETTER  
MYSELF.

OH, WAIT...  
...COME TO  
THINK OF IT,  
I CAN SAY  
IT BETTER.



CAN YOU SAY IT BETTER  
SOME MORE?

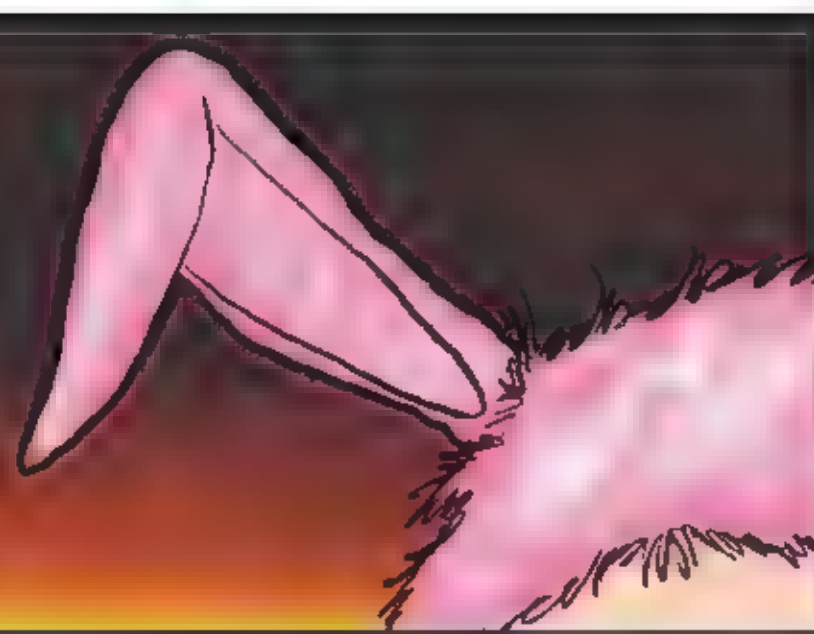


AND  
THAT  
IS WHY  
I DON'T  
MIND.

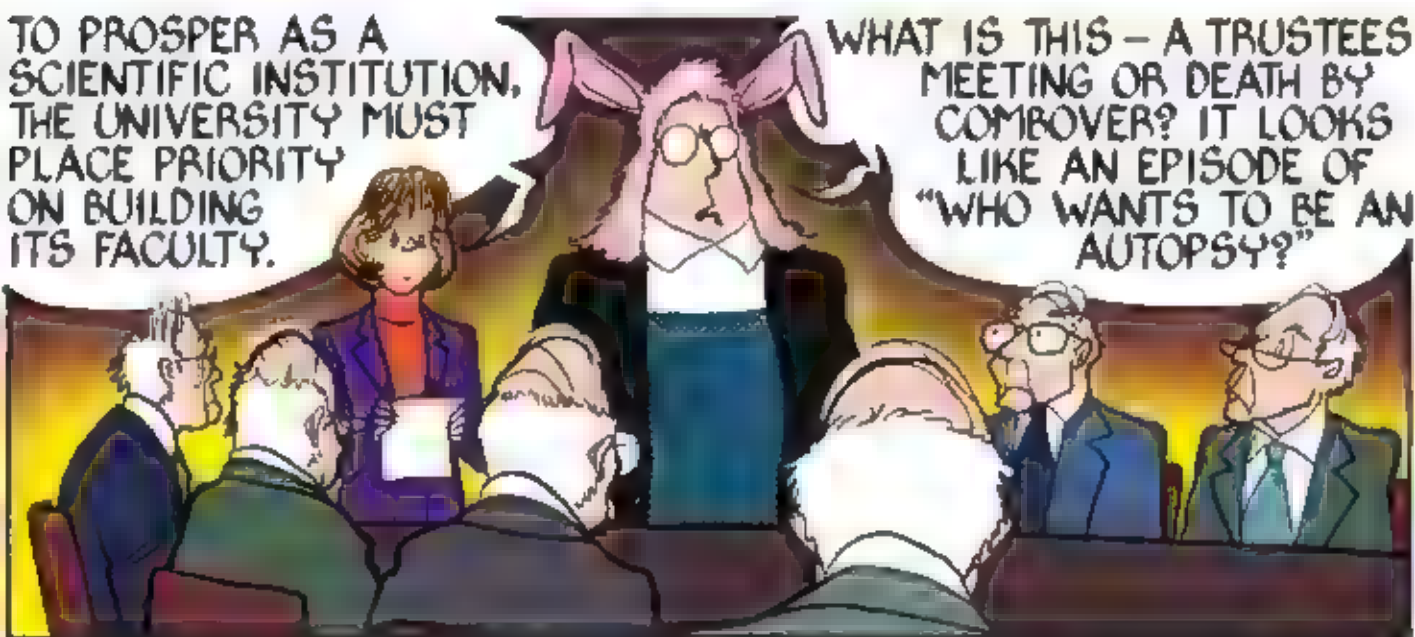
Brooklyn



# 9 CHICKWEED LANE



TO PROSPER AS A  
SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTION,  
THE UNIVERSITY MUST  
PLACE PRIORITY  
ON BUILDING  
ITS FACULTY.

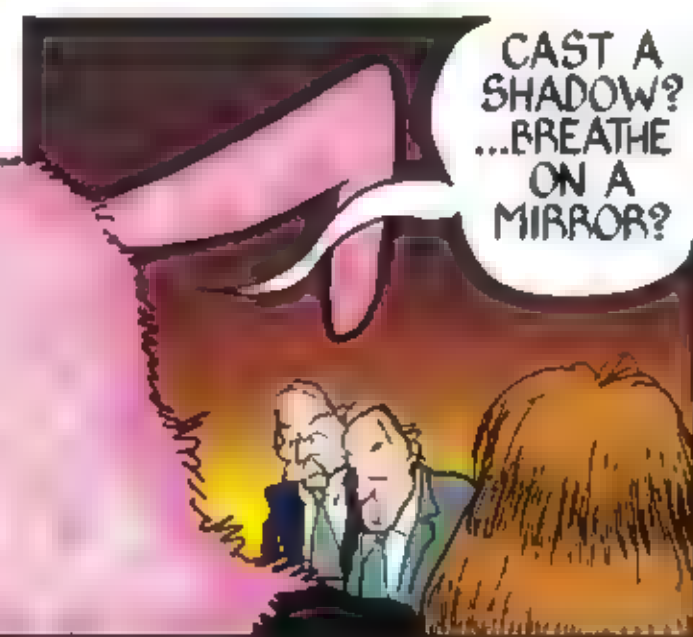


WHAT IS THIS - A TRUSTEES  
MEETING OR DEATH BY  
COMBOVER? IT LOOKS  
LIKE AN EPISODE OF  
"WHO WANTS TO BE AN  
AUTOPSY?"

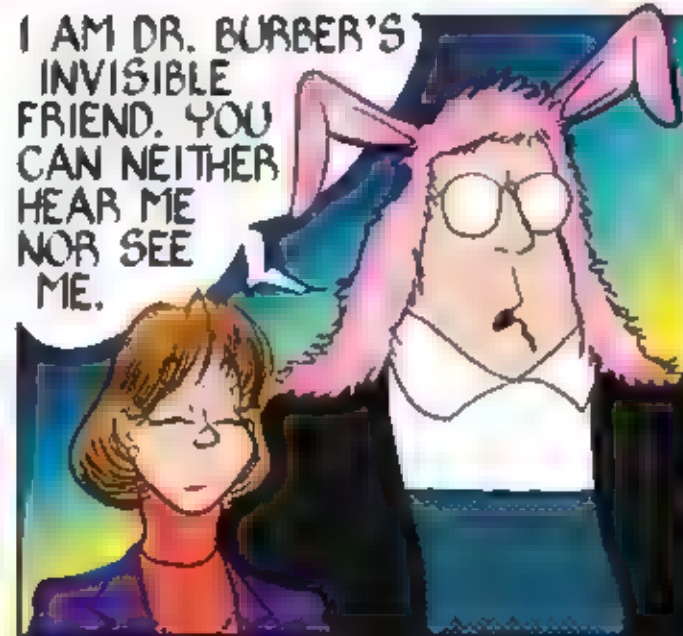
WHAT DID THESE  
CORPSES DO TO  
MEET THE  
REQUIREMENTS  
FOR BEING A  
UNIVERSITY  
TRUSTEE?...



CAST A  
SHADOW?  
...BREATHE  
ON A  
MIRROR?



I BEG YOUR  
PARDON! JUST  
WHO ARE YOU  
AND WHAT ARE  
YOU DOING HERE  
DISRUPTING THIS  
MEETING?!

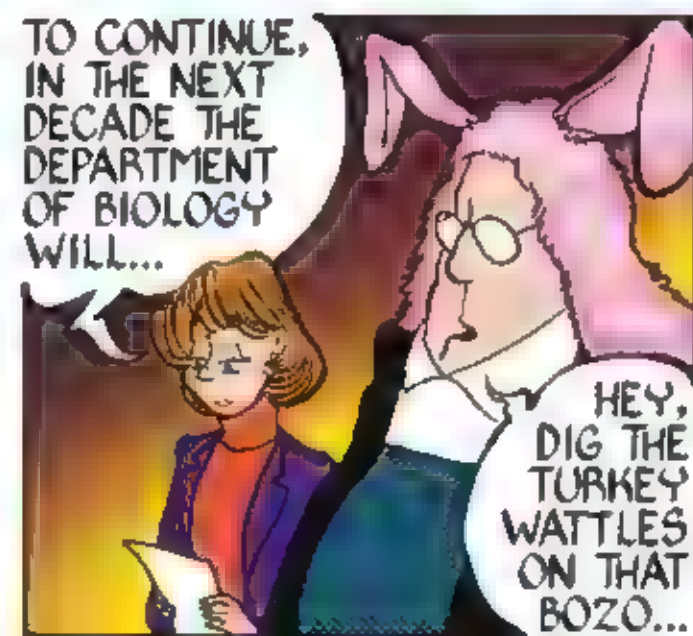


I AM DR. BURBER'S  
INVISIBLE  
FRIEND. YOU  
CAN NEITHER  
HEAR ME  
NOR SEE  
ME.



OH...WELL...UM...  
.....CARRY ON.

THANK  
YOU.



TO CONTINUE,  
IN THE NEXT  
DECADE THE  
DEPARTMENT  
OF BIOLOGY  
WILL...

HEY,  
DIG THE  
TURKEY  
WATTLES  
ON THAT  
BOZO...

IT'S TOO BAD WE CAN'T  
WALK HAND IN HAND INTO  
A SUNSET...BUT WE'VE BEEN  
IN THE PARK ALL NIGHT.



HOW ABOUT  
A SUNRISE?

PERFECT.



WHAT ARE  
YOU DOING?

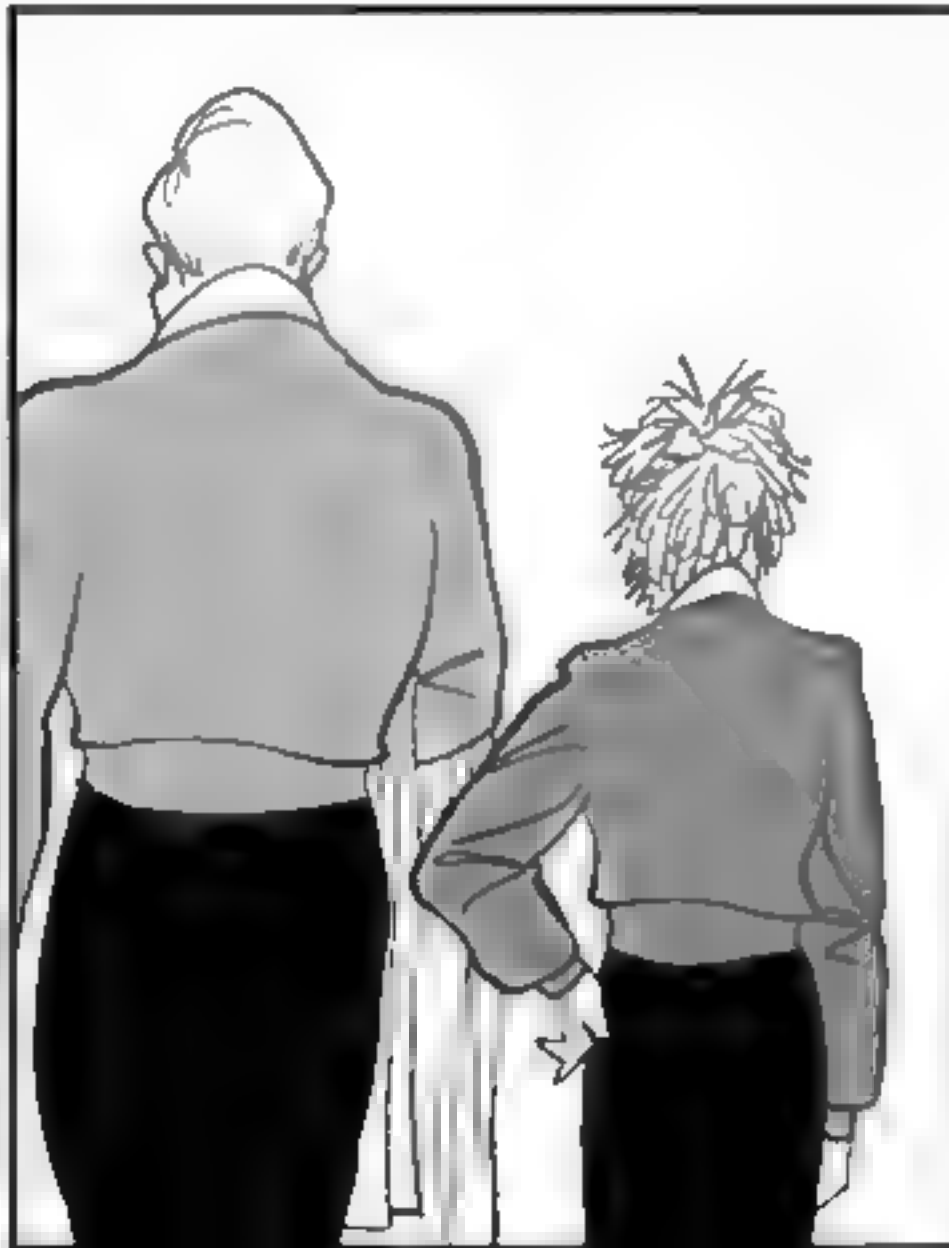
PUTTING A  
FEW LAST TOUCHES  
ON EDDA'S  
WEDDING DRESS.

Brooke





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THAT'S ODD...WE WENT SIGHTSEEING  
OUR LAST DAY IN BRUSSELS, AND ALL  
AMOS TOOK WERE PICTURES OF ME.



I THINK YOU  
ARE THE ONLY  
SIGHT HE WANTED  
TO SEE.

Brooke



AMOS, I'VE KNOWN YOU ALL YOUR LIFE,  
AND I THINK THE WORLD OF YOU. NEVERTHELESS,  
AS EDDA'S MOTHER, I'D LIKE TO SAY ONE LAST  
THING AS I BESTOW  
MY BLESSING ON  
YOU BOTH.  
IT MAY SEEM  
CORNY, BUT  
IF YOU WILL  
INDULGE ME,  
I'LL BE  
QUICK.

OF  
COURSE.

Brooke

IF YOU EVER SAY OR DO ANY-  
THING TO HURT HER OR MAKE-  
HER UNHAPPY EVEN FOR A-  
FLEETING INSTANT I'LL KILL-  
YOU WITH A WHITE HOT FURY-  
THAT WILL LEAVE YOUR-  
CORPSE STARING WITH-  
TERROR IN YOURSIGHTLESS-  
DEAD EYES!

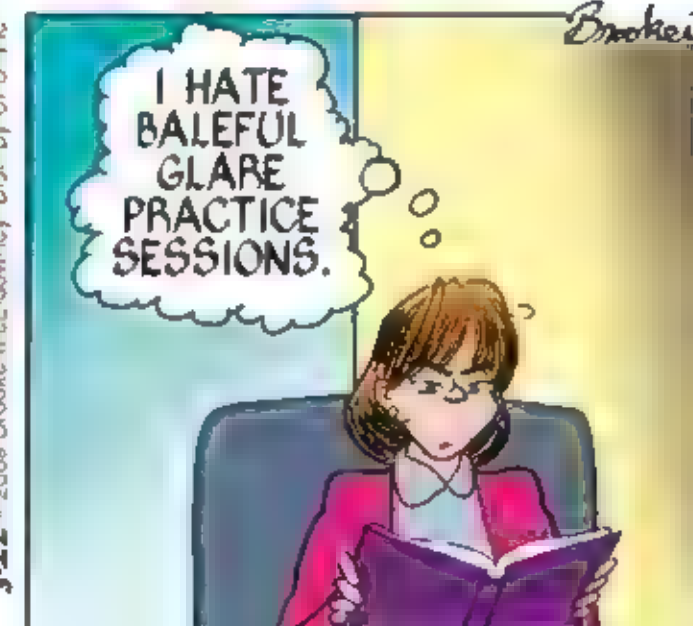
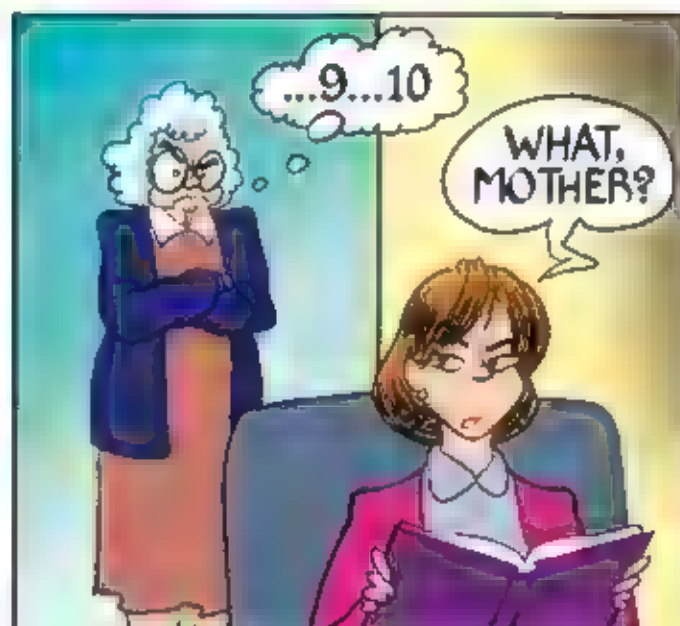
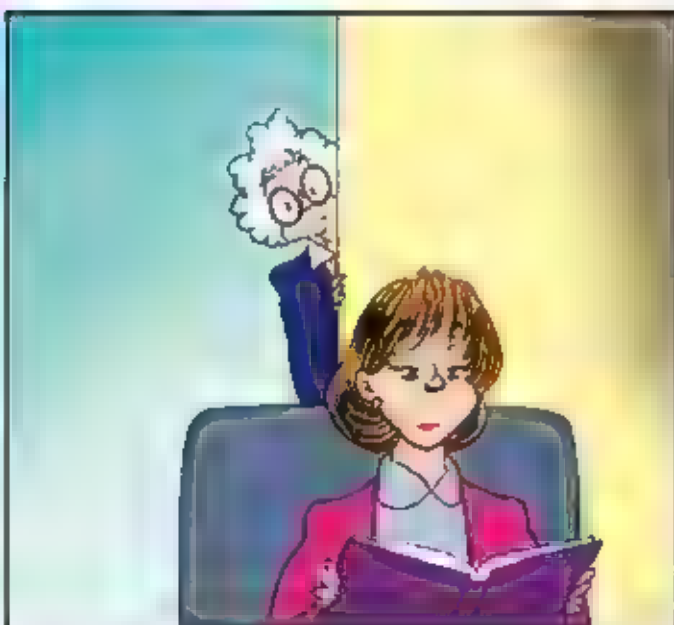
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THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR BLESSING,  
MRS. DR. BURBER.

YOU'RE VERY  
WELCOME, AMOS.  
NOW GO CHANGE  
YOUR TROUSERS.

# 9 CHICKWEED LANE

®



Brooke





OKAY...THE FIRST STEP IS  
TO HAND ME THE  
WEDDING DRESS,  
NICE AND  
SLOWLY.



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NOW PUT YOUR  
HANDS BEHIND YOUR  
BACK AND WALK  
AWAY...JUST WALK  
AWAY.



*Brooke*



OKAY...  
WHERE ARE  
THE SPRIGS  
OF BABY'S  
BREATH?



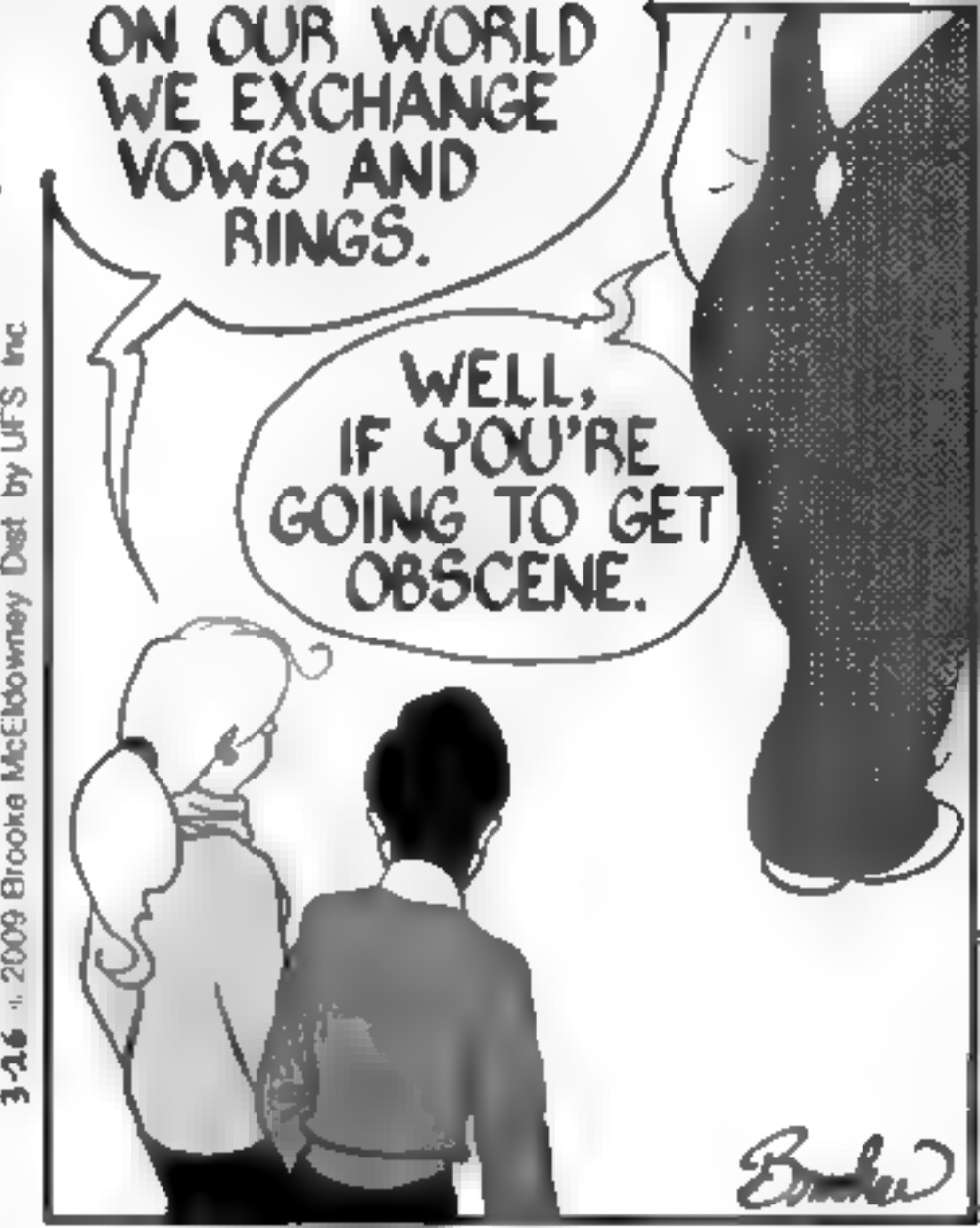
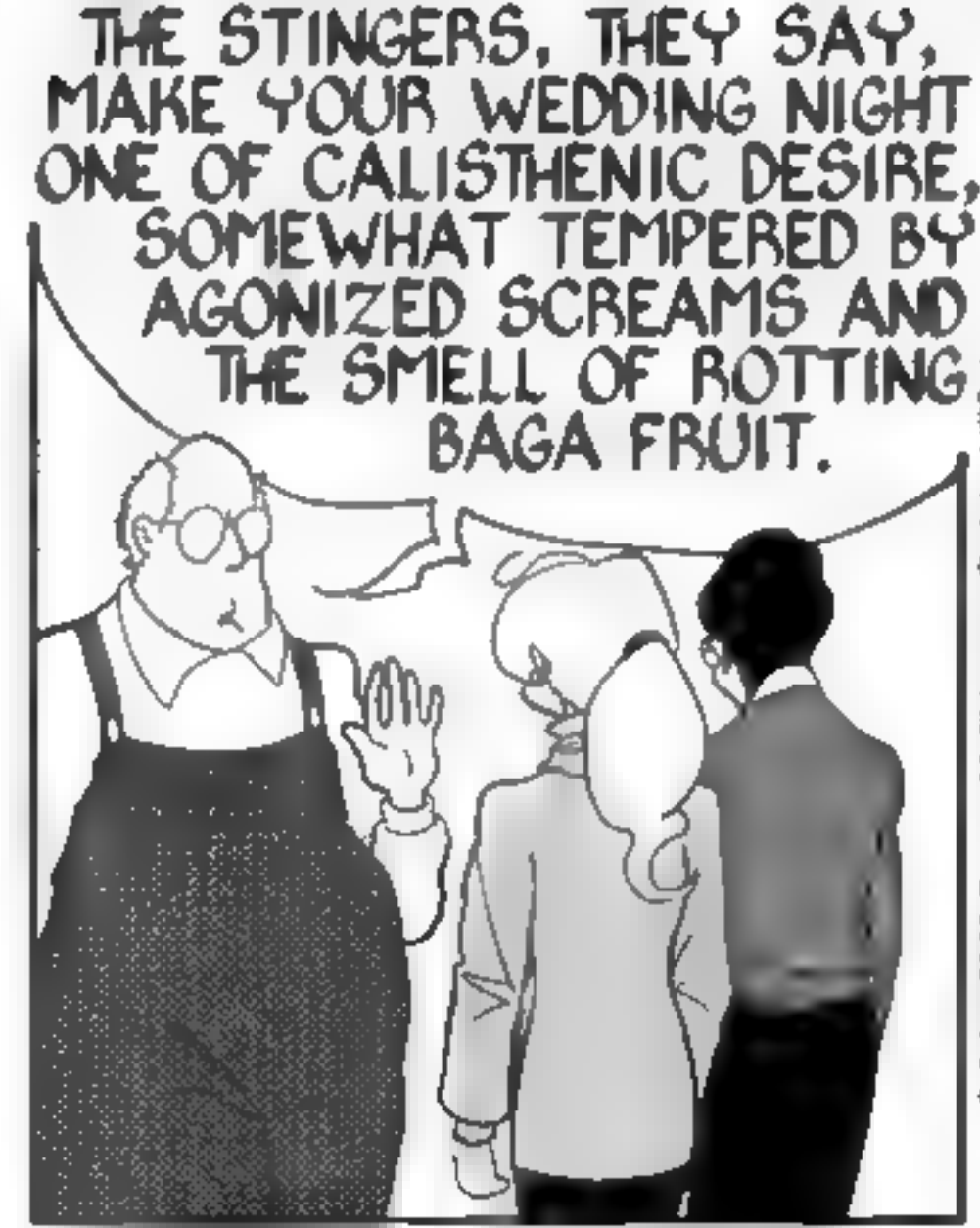
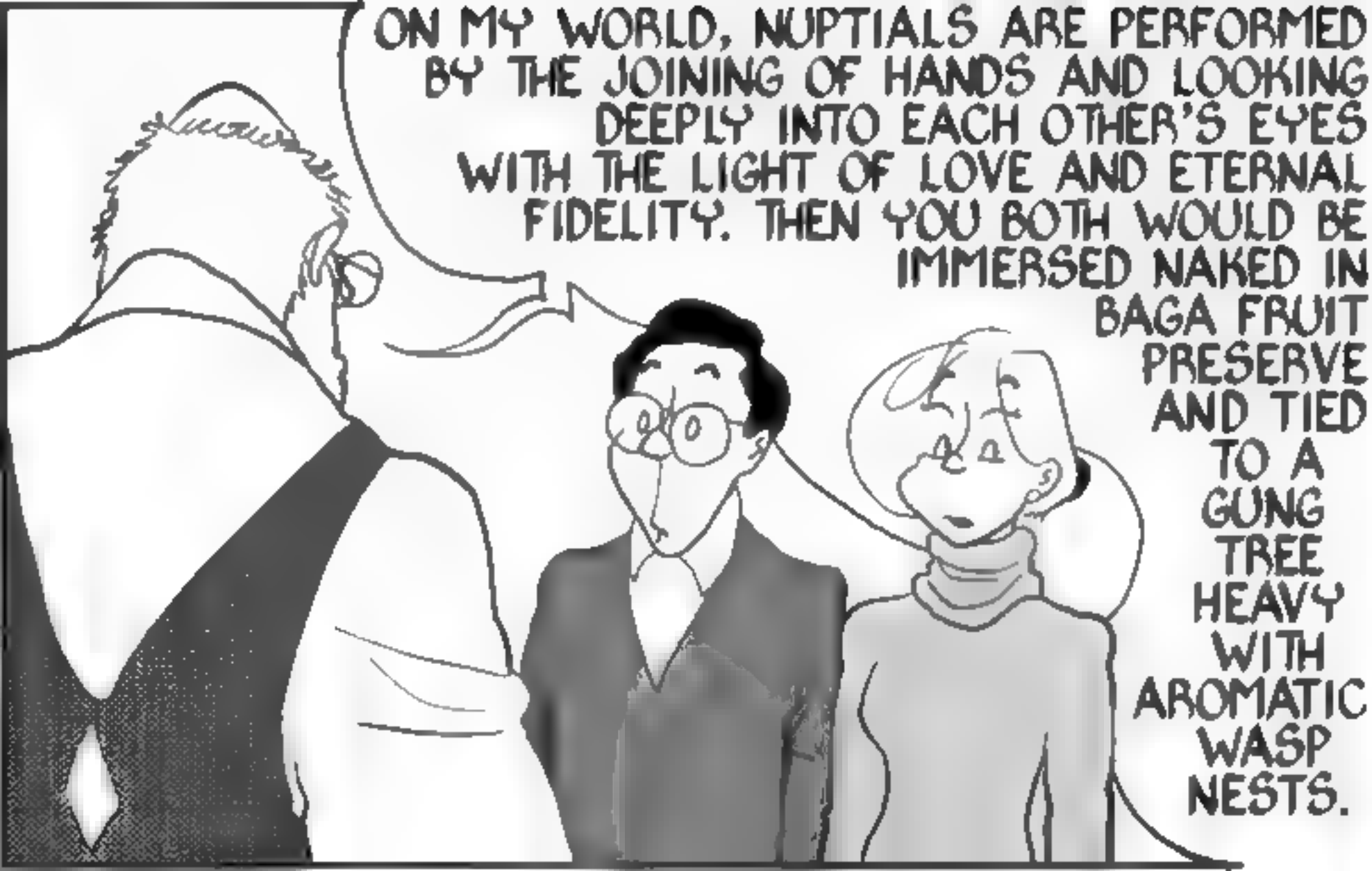
MAN,  
I CAN'T  
GO  
COLD  
TURKEY!





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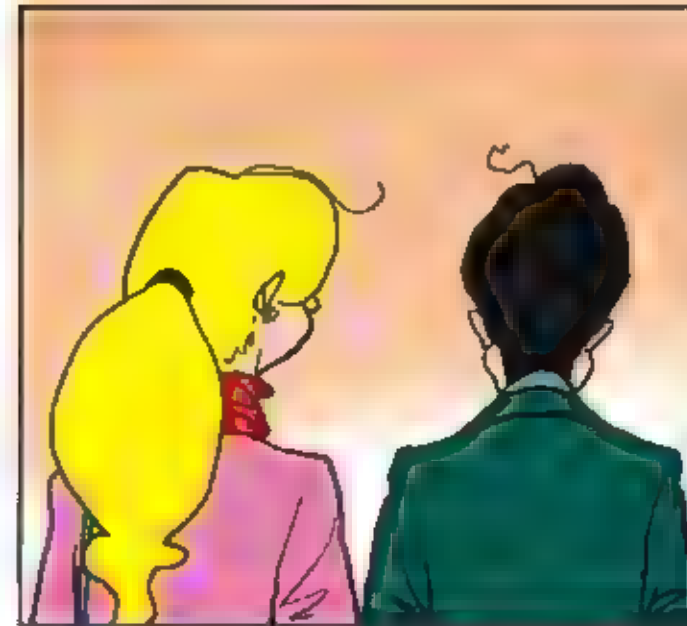




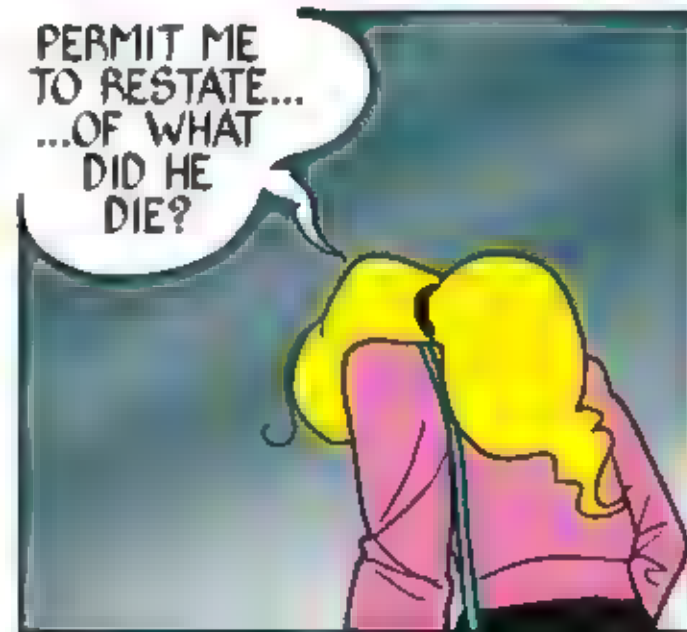
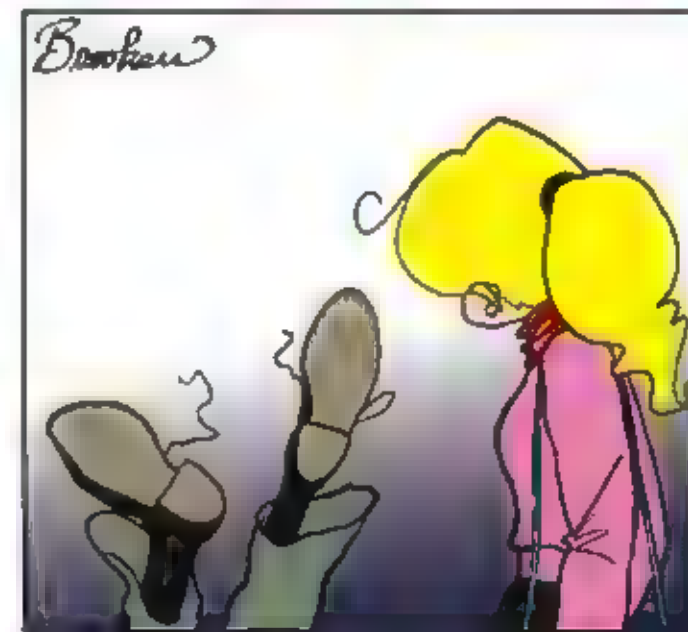
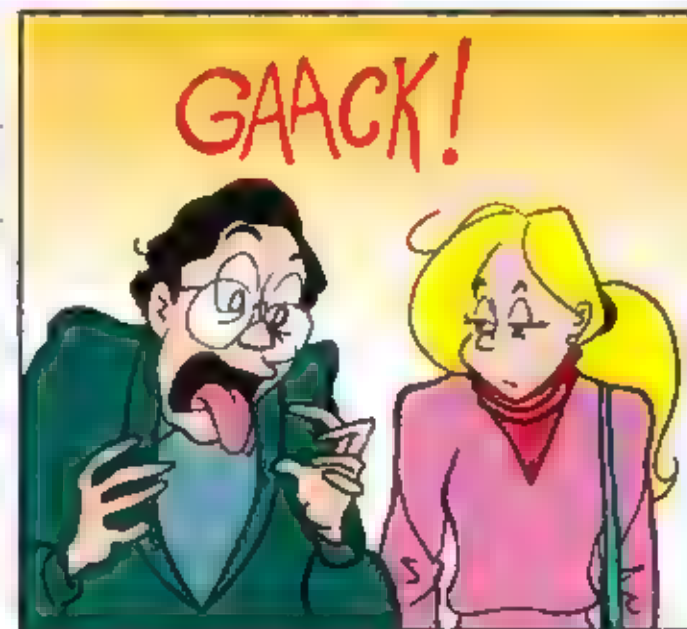


# 9 CHICKWEED LANE

®



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I THOUGHT THAT AFTER  
WHAT HAPPENED IN  
BRUSSELS, YOU'D JUST  
NATURALLY WANT TO GET  
HITCHED. I MEAN, THE  
WHOLE  
WORLD  
THOUGHT SO.

SURELY  
NOT THE  
WHOLE  
WORLD.

ALL OF IT. YOU HAVEN'T  
SEEN THE BROADCASTS.  
THEY WENT  
EVERYWHERE.

PEOPLE  
COULDN'T  
POSSIBLY  
HAVE FOUND  
IT ALL THAT  
ENTERTAINING.

YOU PUT IN THE DISC  
MARKED "BÖSENDORFER."  
I'LL GET THE  
POPCORN.

*Brooke*

popcorn?

SO...AFTER EVERYTHING  
THAT PASSED BETWEEN YOU  
AND AMOS IN BRUSSELS,  
YOU TWO ARE NOT  
GOING TO GET  
MARRIED?

WE'RE  
JUST NOT  
READY  
YET.



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"YET"?  
OH, LORD,  
THROW ME  
A BONE!

AMOS  
GAVE ME  
A PROMISE  
RING.



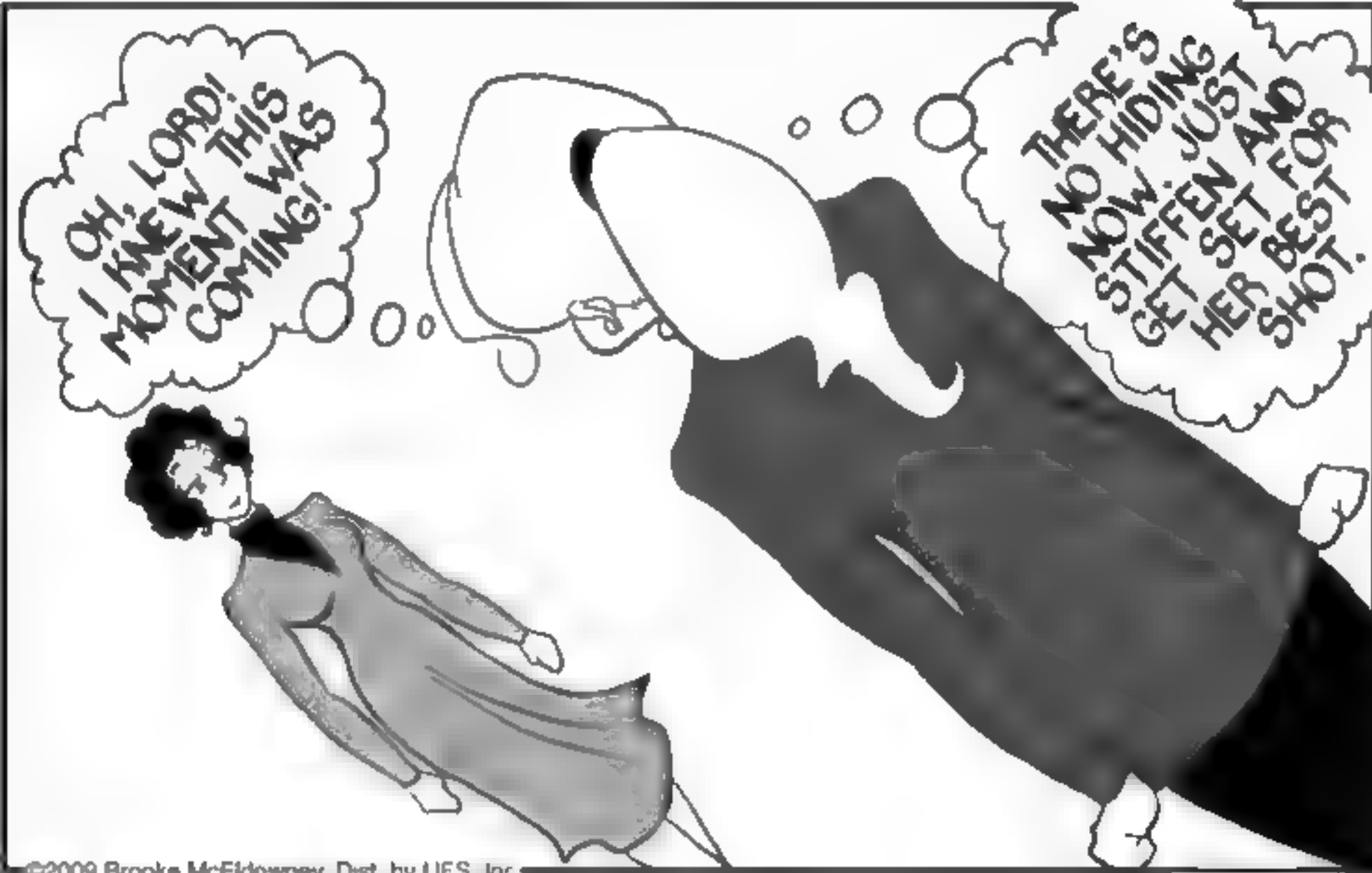
Brooke



I WENT BLIND SEWING  
A THOUSAND TINY PEARLS  
ON THE BODICE OF YOUR  
PURE-WHITE WEDDING  
GOWN, AND HE GAVE YOU  
A PLASTIC GEWGAW?  
...ARE YOU BOTH  
IDIOTS?

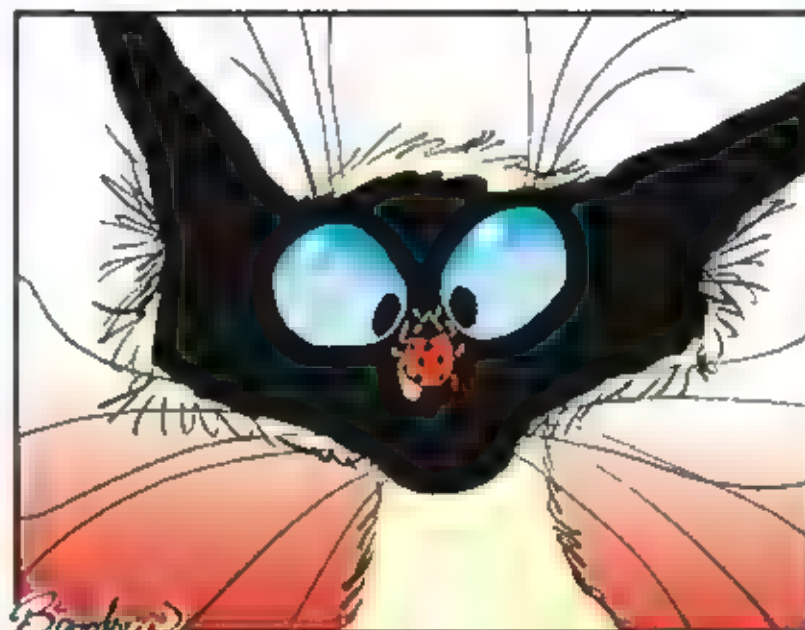
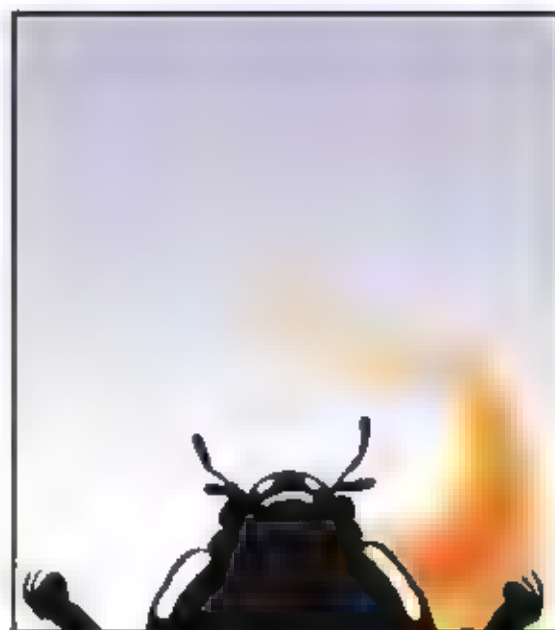
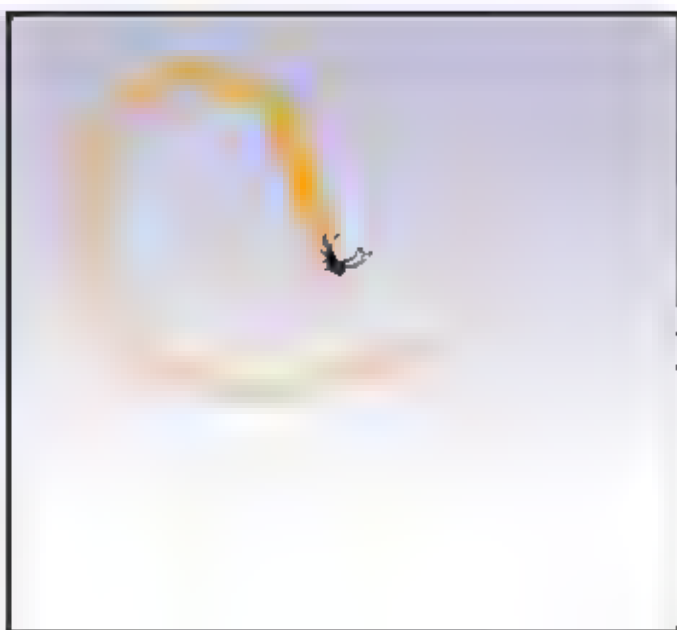
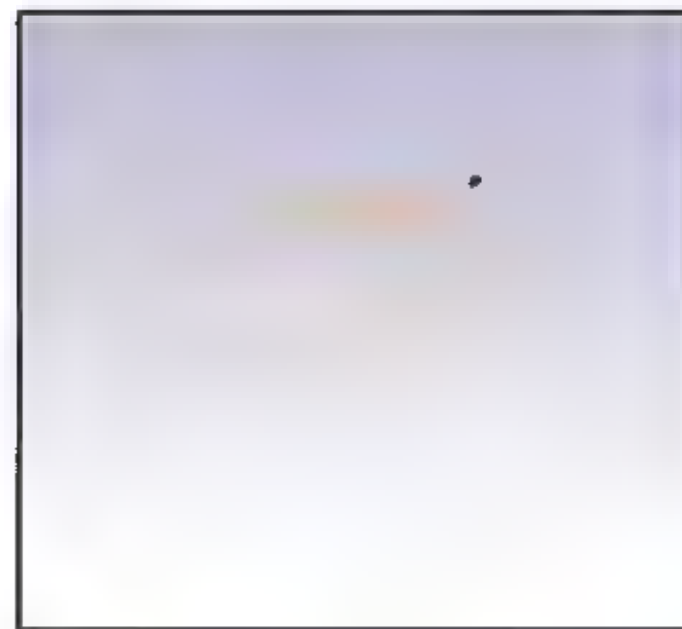
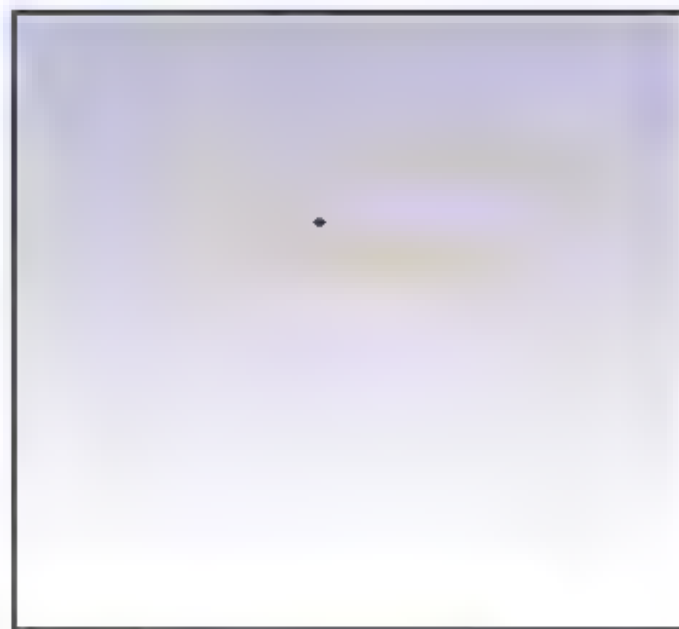


WHY DOES THE WORD  
"IDIOTS" KEEP CROPPING UP  
IN THESE CONVERSATIONS  
LATELY?









SINCE YOU WENT TO  
BRUSSELS, SO MUCH HAS  
BEEN HAPPENING HERE.  
...I'M UNDER CONSIDERATION  
FOR A POST OF  
HEADMISTRESS...



A PUBLISHER HAS BEEN  
TALKING TO ME ABOUT A  
BOOK ON MY EXPERIENCE  
LEAVING MY ORDER.



AND FRANCIS AND  
I ARE TRYING TO  
HAVE A BABY.



*Brooke*

YOU WON'T MIND MY  
SAYING THAT LAST BIT  
DOESN'T COME AS A  
COMPLETE BOLT  
FROM THE BLUE.



WHEN THE VIDEOS OF YOU  
AND AMOS BEGAN SHOWING  
HERE, I GOT A DISTRESSED  
CALL FROM SISTER  
STEVEN.



ALL I  
SAID  
TO HER  
WAS,  
"ISN'T  
LOVE  
WON-  
DERFUL?"

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SHE PROBABLY THOUGHT  
YOU WERE CONDONING  
SIN.



I WAS  
CONDONING  
TRUE  
LOVE.

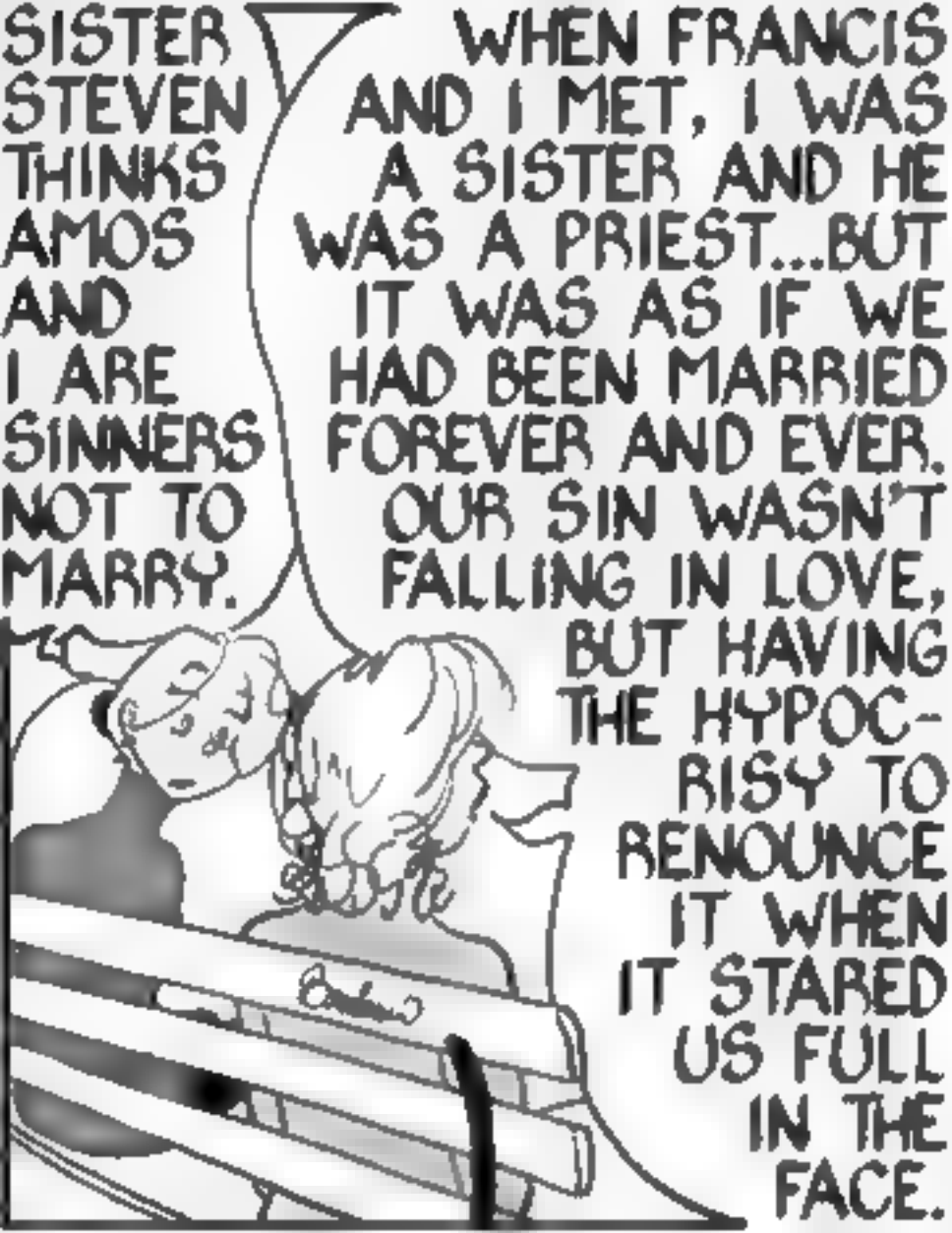
THEN WHY  
ARE YOU  
WHISPERING?

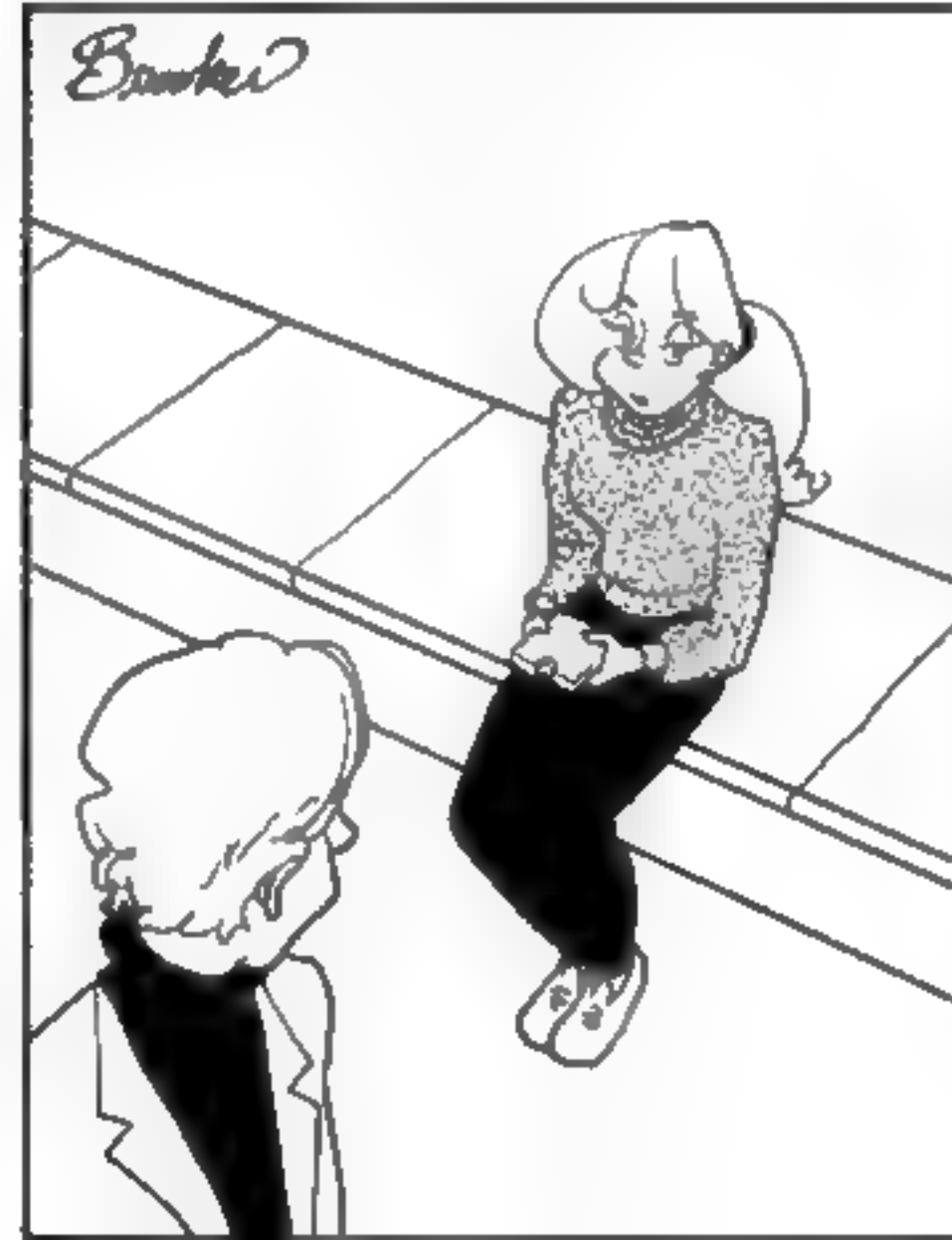
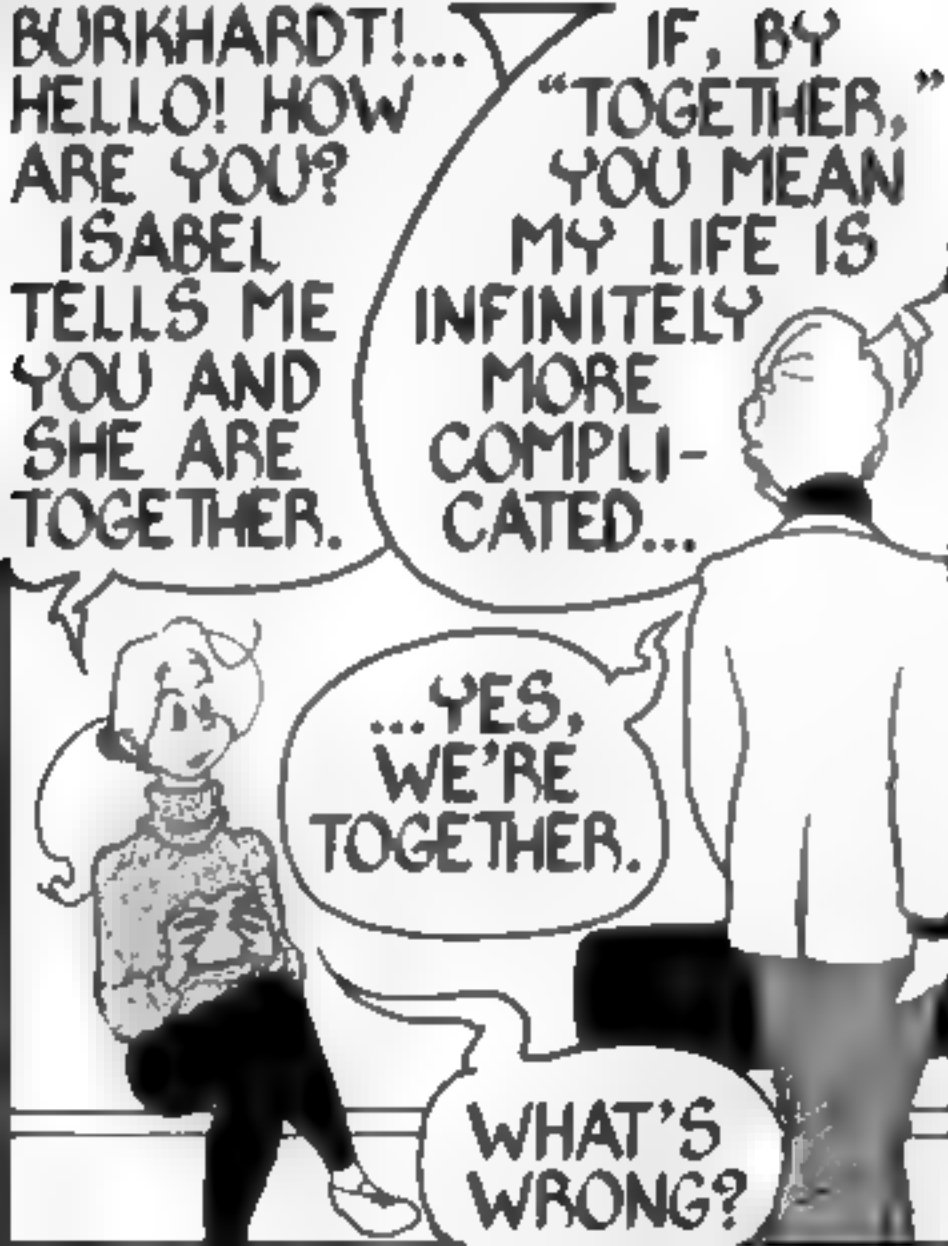


NOTHING SOUNDS  
QUITE SO JUICY AS  
WHOLESOMENESS  
WHEN YOU  
WHISPER IT.

Brocka







YOU CHASED  
ME BECAUSE  
YOU FOUND  
ME  
"FLAWED"?

PRETTY  
MUCH THE  
SORT OF GIRL  
I ALWAYS  
USED TO  
GRAVI-  
TATE TO.

BACK AWAY, EDDA!  
CHANGE THE  
SUBJECT!  
DO NOT  
PURSUE  
THIS...

*Brooke*

HOW MANY  
FLAWS?

IF  
RESTRICTED  
TO MAJOR  
FLAWS...  
...27.

I TOLD YOU  
TO CHANGE  
THE SUBJECT!

YOU'VE ALWAYS FOUND  
ME FLAWED?!

YES...  
...FOR  
INSTANCE,  
NOW YOUR  
NAGGING  
VANITY  
WON'T  
ENDURE  
THE IDEA  
THAT  
SOMEBODY  
MIGHT NOT  
FIND YOU  
FATALLY  
CUTE.



THAT DESCRIBES ISABEL  
TO A T. SHE CAN'T DRAW  
A BREATH UPON WHICH SHE  
DOESN'T THINK SHE'S  
GORGEOUS. ISN'T SHE  
GUILTY OF VANITY?

NO.



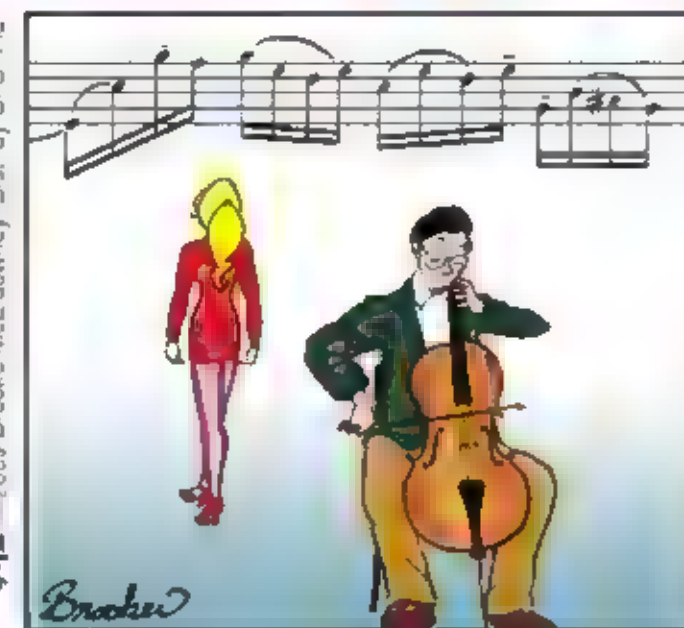
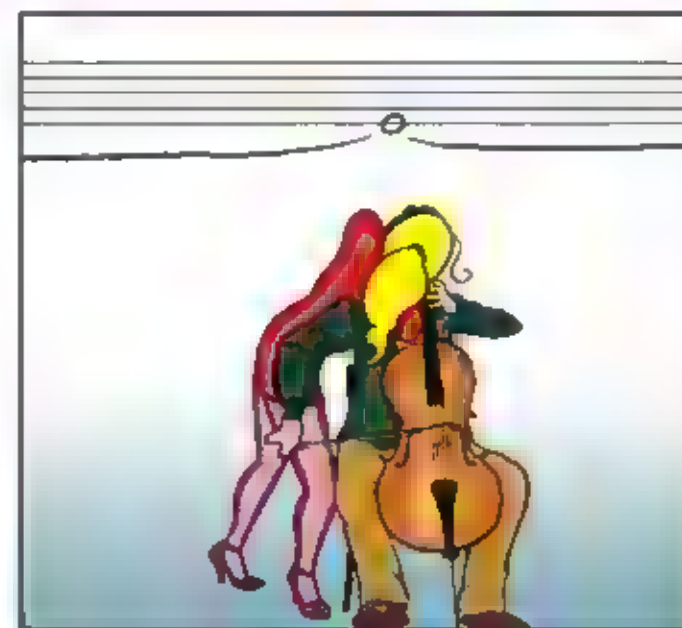
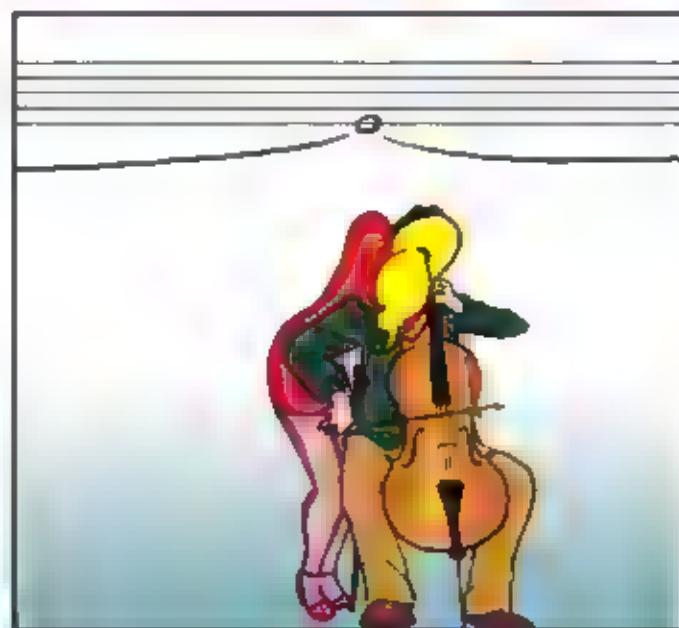
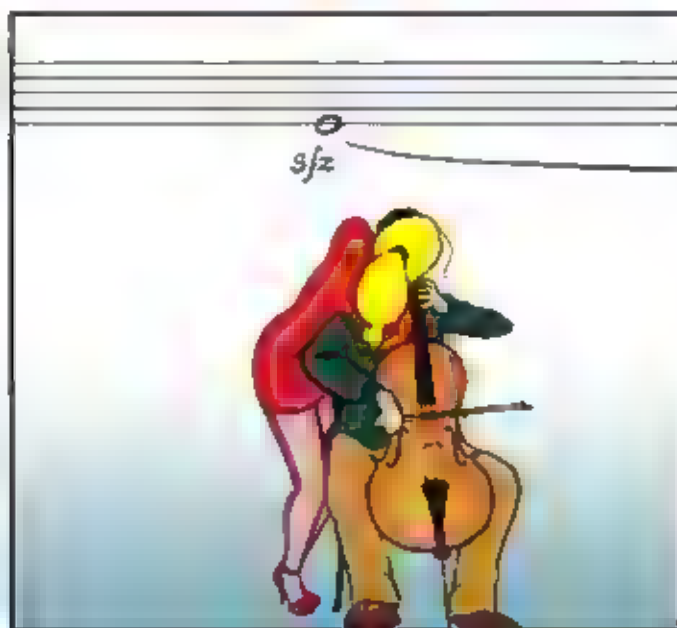
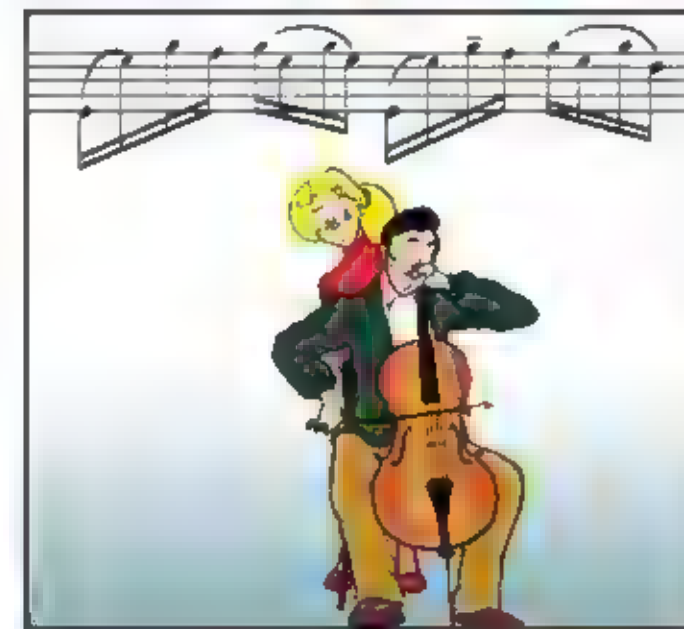
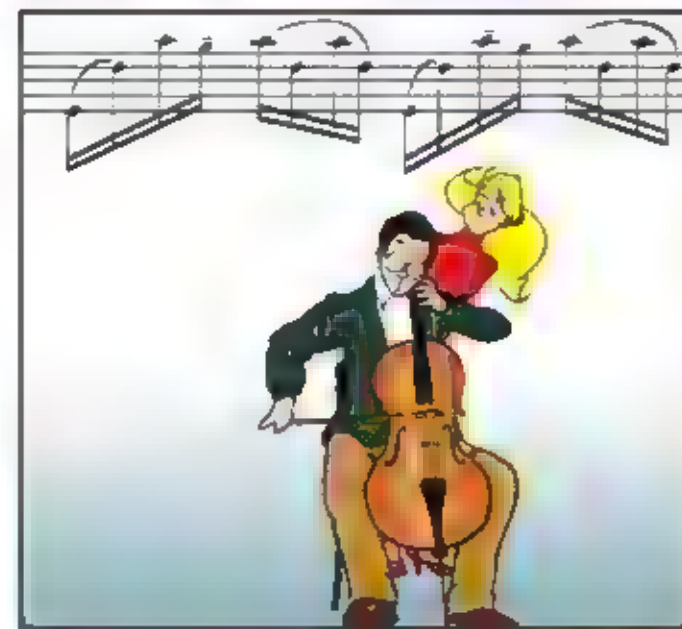
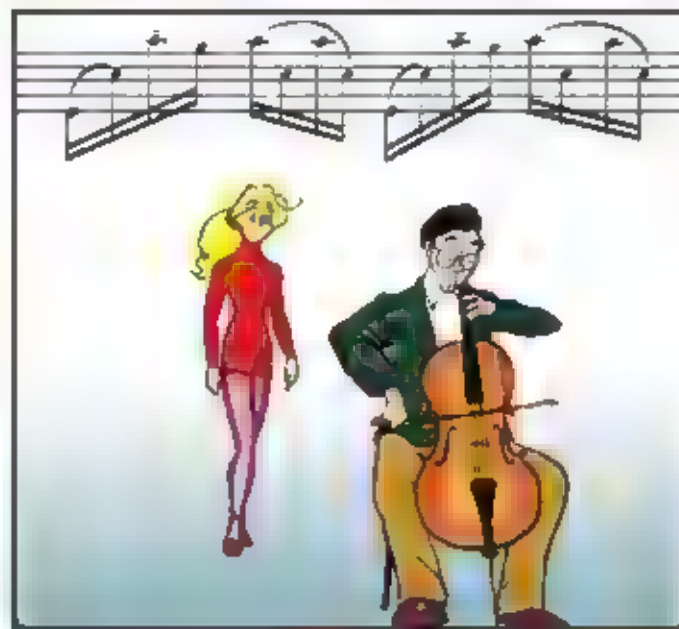
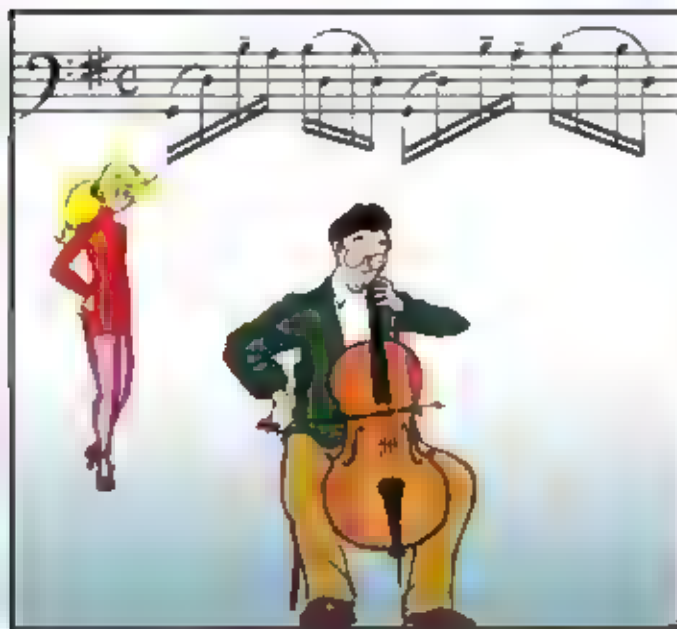
ISABEL IS GORGEOUS.  
SHE IS GUILTY OF  
ACCURACY.



TEETH-GRINDING...  
...YOUR TOTAL PERSONAL  
FLAWS JUST WENT UP  
TO 28.

















I KNOW I'VE ALWAYS  
BEEN CRITICAL OF YOU.  
BUT...JULIETTE,  
DO YOU FEEL  
I NEVER LOVED  
YOU?

OH, MOTHER...

I NEED TO KNOW.

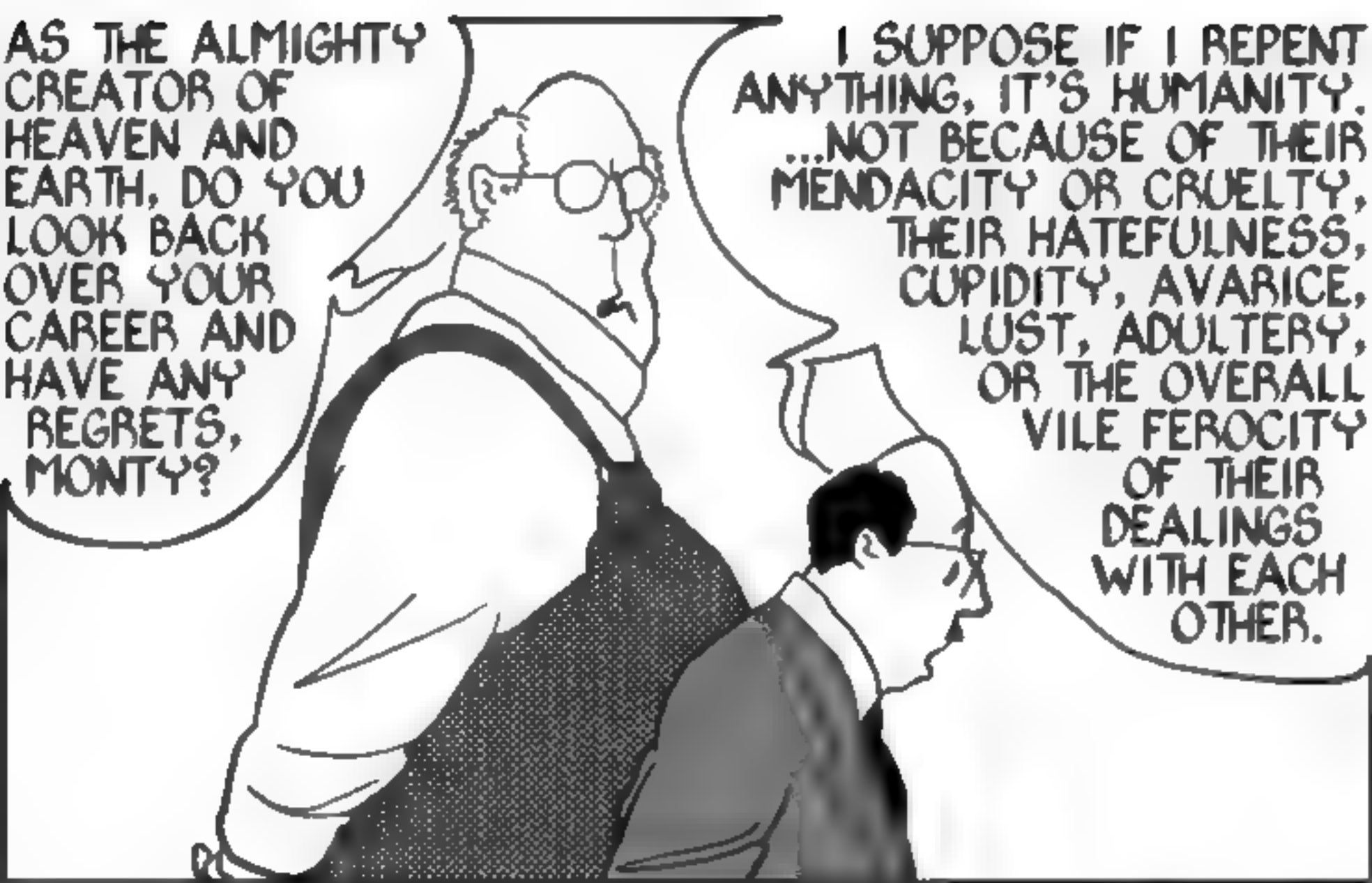
MOTHER,  
DO YOU KNOW  
IF YOU LOVED  
ME?

...yes

THEN HOW COULD I  
NOT KNOW?

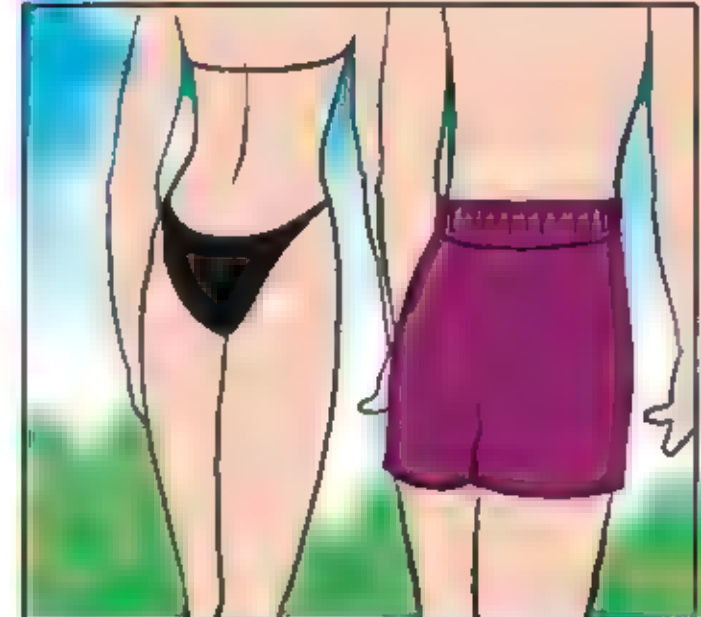
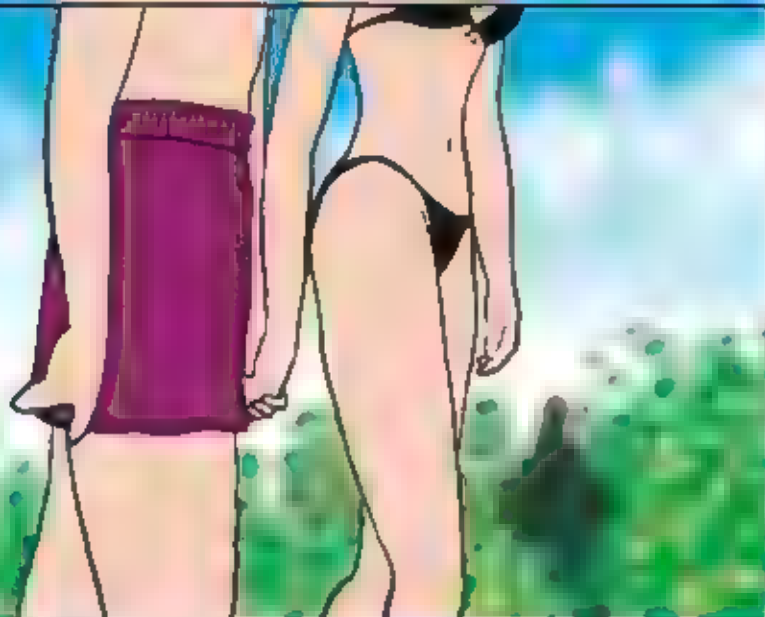
*Barbara*



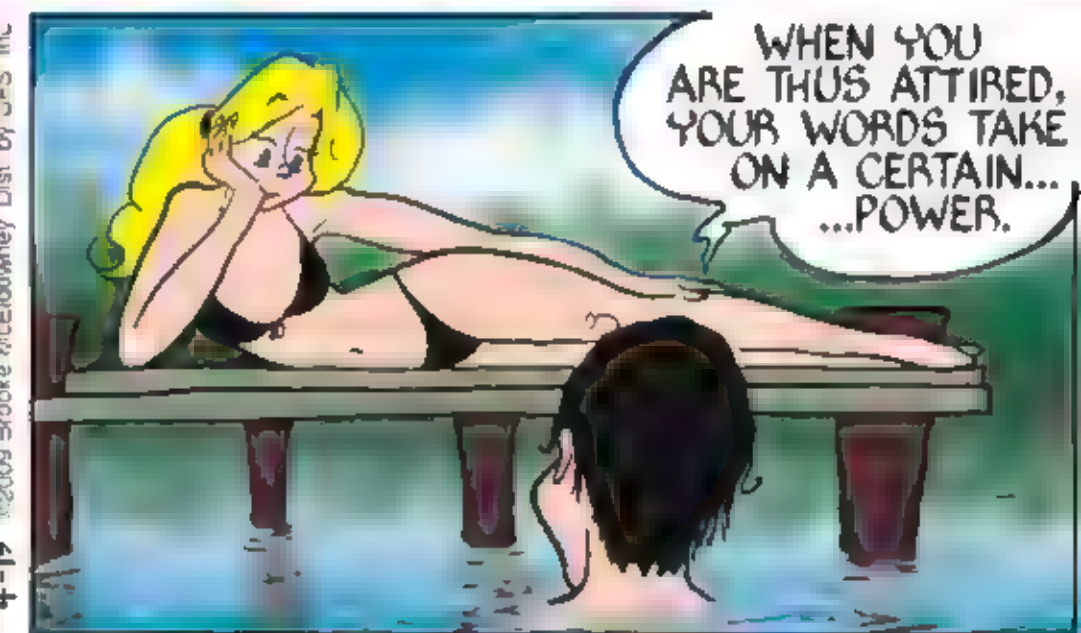
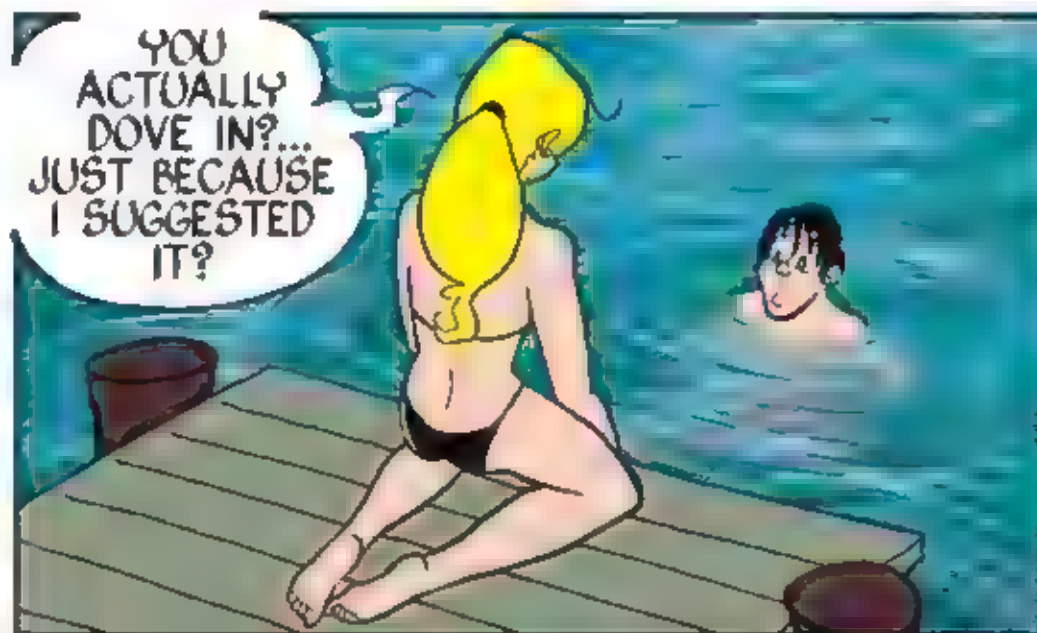
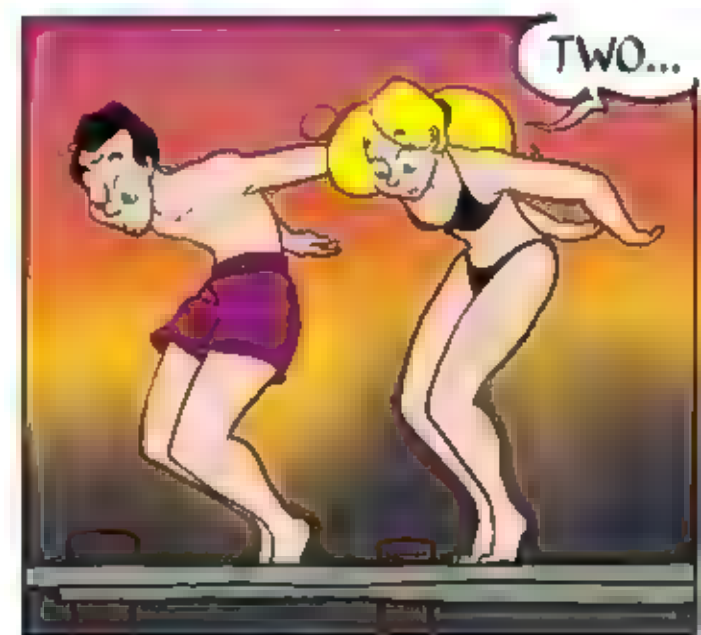
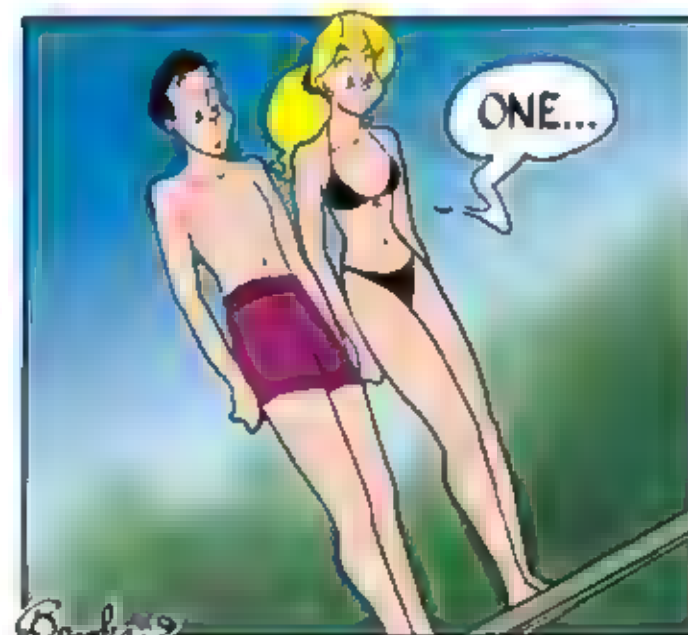


# 9 CHICKWEED LANE

®



THE WATER TEMPERATURE IS GLACIAL, AND JUMPING IS INSANITY. BUT EVERY YEAR MOM AND I COME HERE, AND EACH OF US TRIES TO FOOL THE OTHER INTO TAKING THE PLUNGE. IT'S KIND OF A TRADITION...ARE YOU IN?



DO YOU THINK, AFTER  
EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED  
BETWEEN US, THE SUDDEN  
INTENSIFYING OF OUR  
RELATIONSHIP IN BRUSSELS...



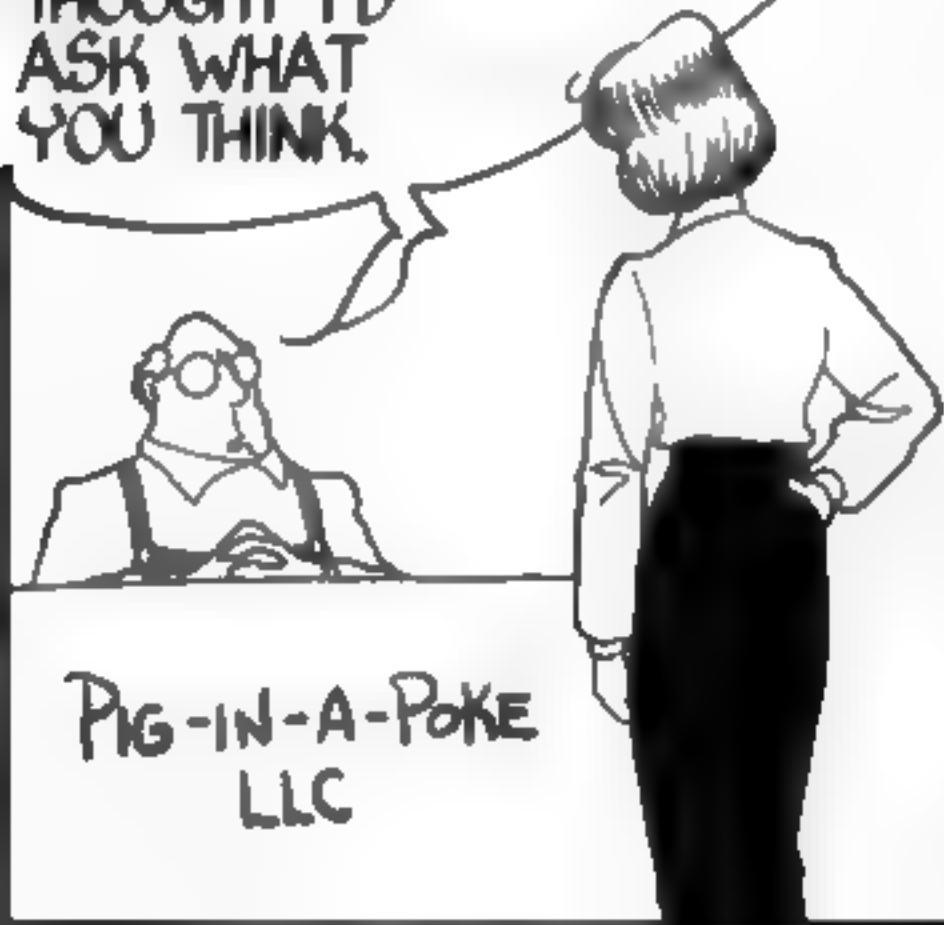
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...THAT WE LEARNED A  
SOBERING LESSON ABOUT  
ACTING ON IMPULSE WITHOUT  
SOLEMN CONSIDERATION?





I'VE DECIDED TO GO PUBLIC.  
...I'M GOING TO START  
SELLING STOCKS IN MY  
BUSINESS. I JUST  
THOUGHT I'D  
ASK WHAT  
YOU THINK.



BUT YOU DO NOTHING...  
...YOU HAVE NOTHING. YOU'RE  
COMPLETELY FECKLESS...  
...YOU'RE JUST GUSTS OF  
WORDS AND STALE AIR.



THANK YOU, DR. BURBER.  
I'M OPEN FOR BUSINESS,  
READY TO CLEAN UP.  
I FEEL VITALIZED!



*Brooke*

I FEEL  
STANDARD  
AND  
POOR.



THE GALACTIC EARTH-SPEAK TRANSLATOR  
(to penetrate the dense atmosphere  
of words)

PRESIDENT:  
A PAID PUBLIC EMPLOYEE  
TREATED AS A DEITY



*Broder*

GOD:  
A DEITY TREATED  
AS AN UNPAID  
PUBLIC EMPLOYEE







THE GALACTIC EARTH-SPEAK TRANSLATOR  
(to penetrate the  
dense atmosphere  
of words)

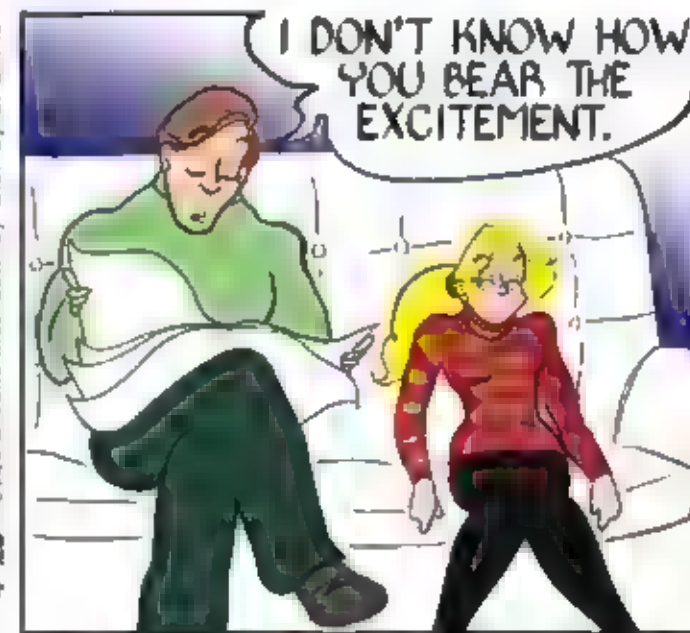
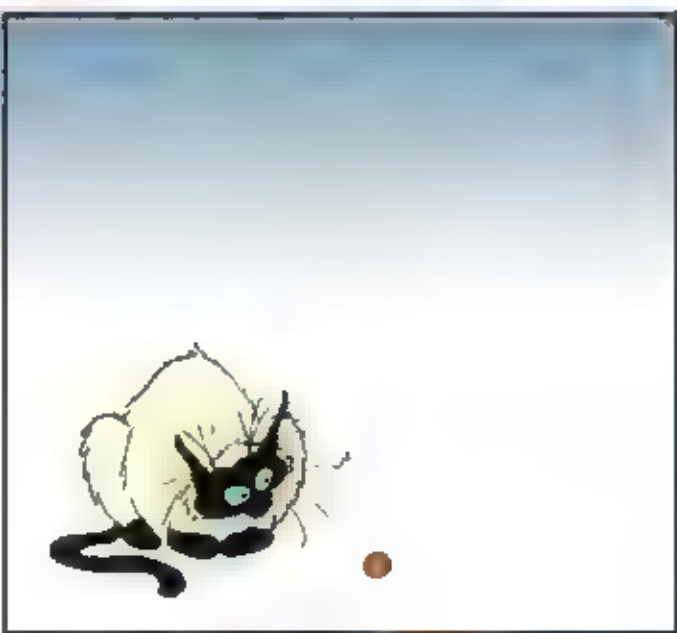
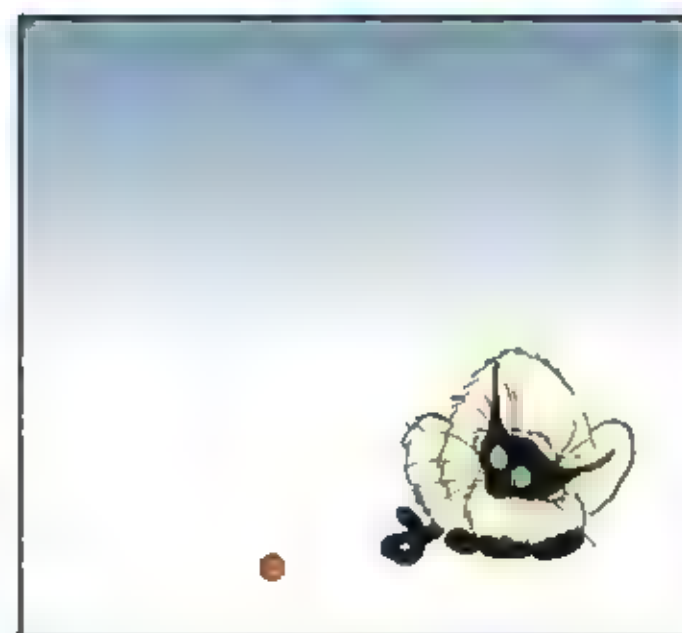
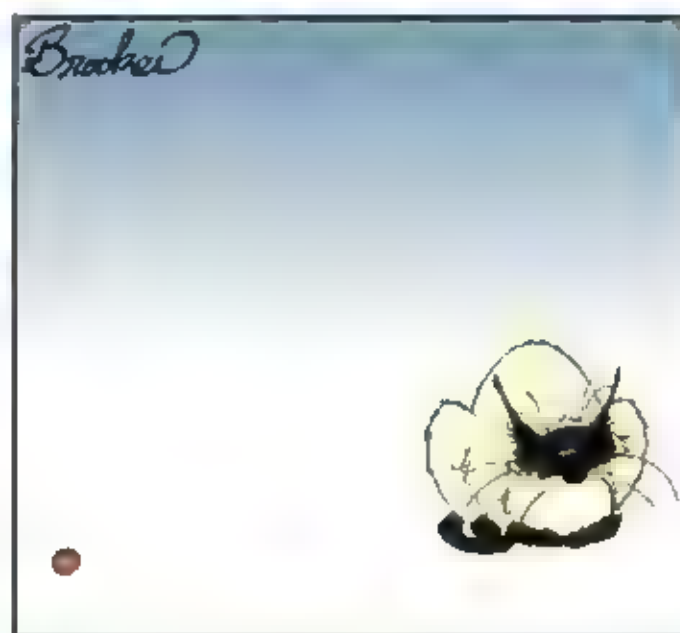
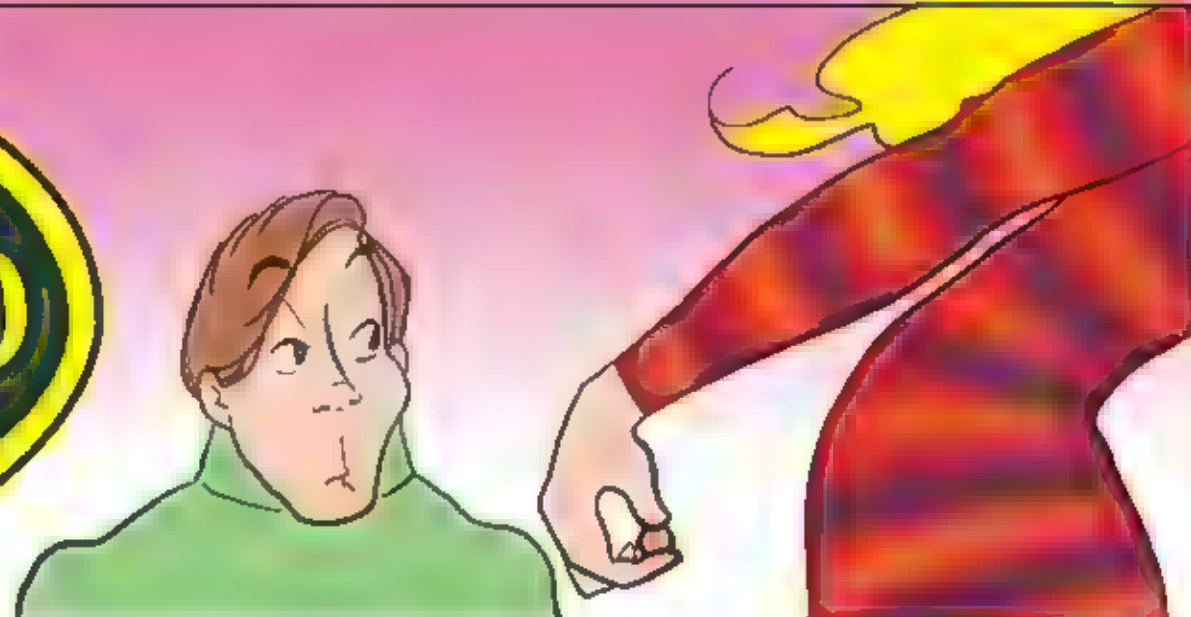
LET ME  
BE PERFECTLY  
CLEAR ABOUT  
THIS...

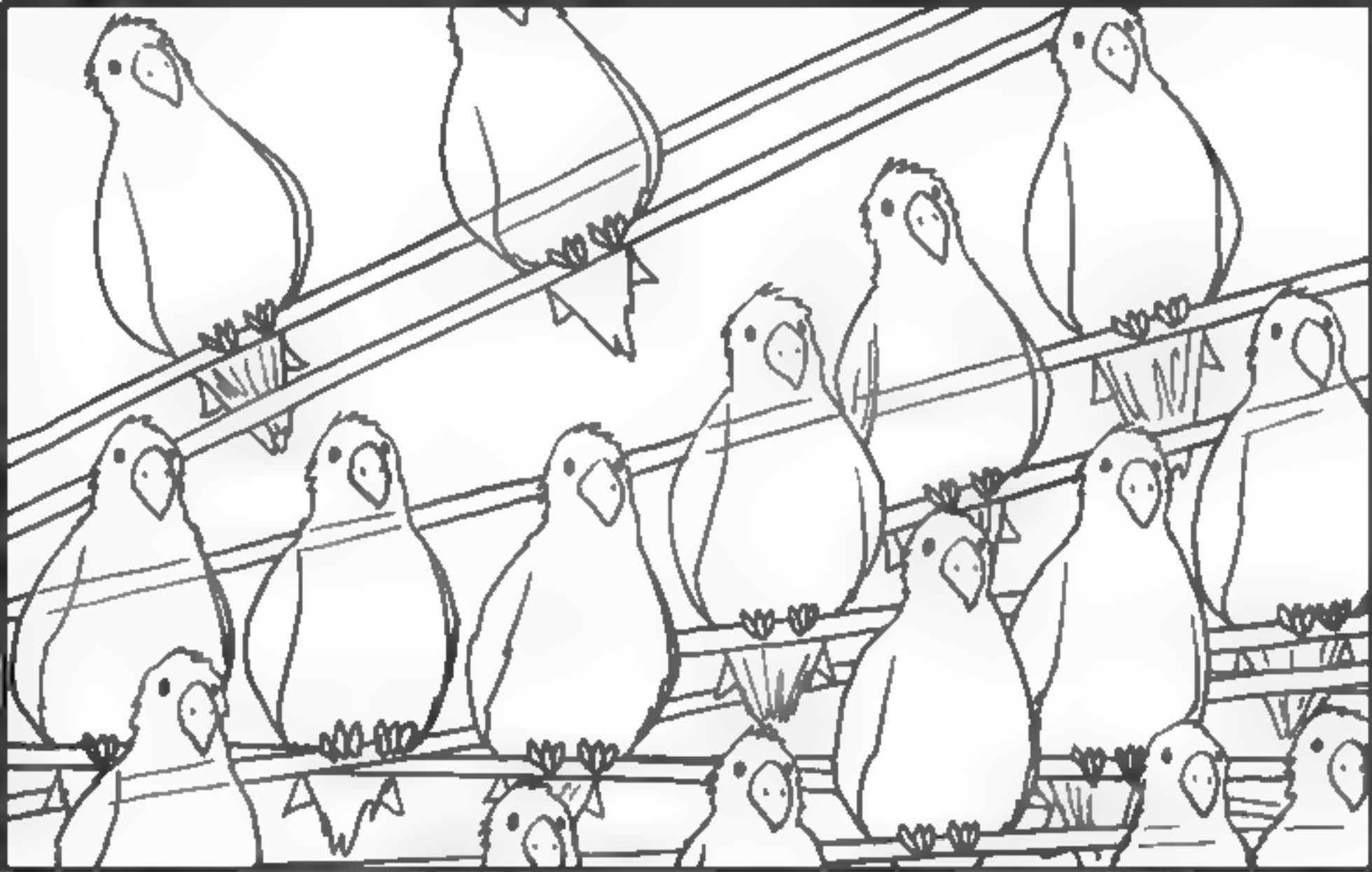
TRANSLATION:

BORN IN  
ALABAMA,  
BORN IN A GENTLY  
POOR AREA LIKE  
WAS IN THE STATE  
... HE WAS SKIN  
TIGHT...

Brooke













I'VE BEGUN TO NOTICE A RATHER PECULIAR PHENOMENON. EVERY TIME I START TO TELL YOU THAT I LOVE YOU, MY MOUTH EXPERIENCES A STRANGE PRESSURE, AND I CANNOT COMPLETE THE PHRASE.



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REALLY?



YES. I ONLY HAVE TO SAY "I LOVE Y..."



*Brooke*



THERE. IT HAPPENED AGAIN.

ASTONISHING! I THINK MORE RESEARCH IS IN ORDER.



IS IT REALLY POSSIBLE TO LOSE YOUR HEART  
TO SOMEONE YOU'VE KNOWN ALL YOUR LIFE...  
...TO EXPERIENCE THE EVENT OF FALLING  
IN LOVE? IS IT POSSIBLE WITHOUT  
NOVELTY, WITHOUT A SENSE  
OF DISCOVERY, OF BEING  
ROMANTICALLY THUNDERSTRUCK?  
WE KNOW EACH OTHER'S  
PECULIARITIES WITH AN  
INTIMACY THAT FEW MARRIED  
COUPLES HAVE.

SO WHY IS  
IT I'M ALWAYS  
MAD ABOUT  
YOU?

...YOU'RE CRYING  
AND SMILING  
ALL AT THE  
SAME TIME.

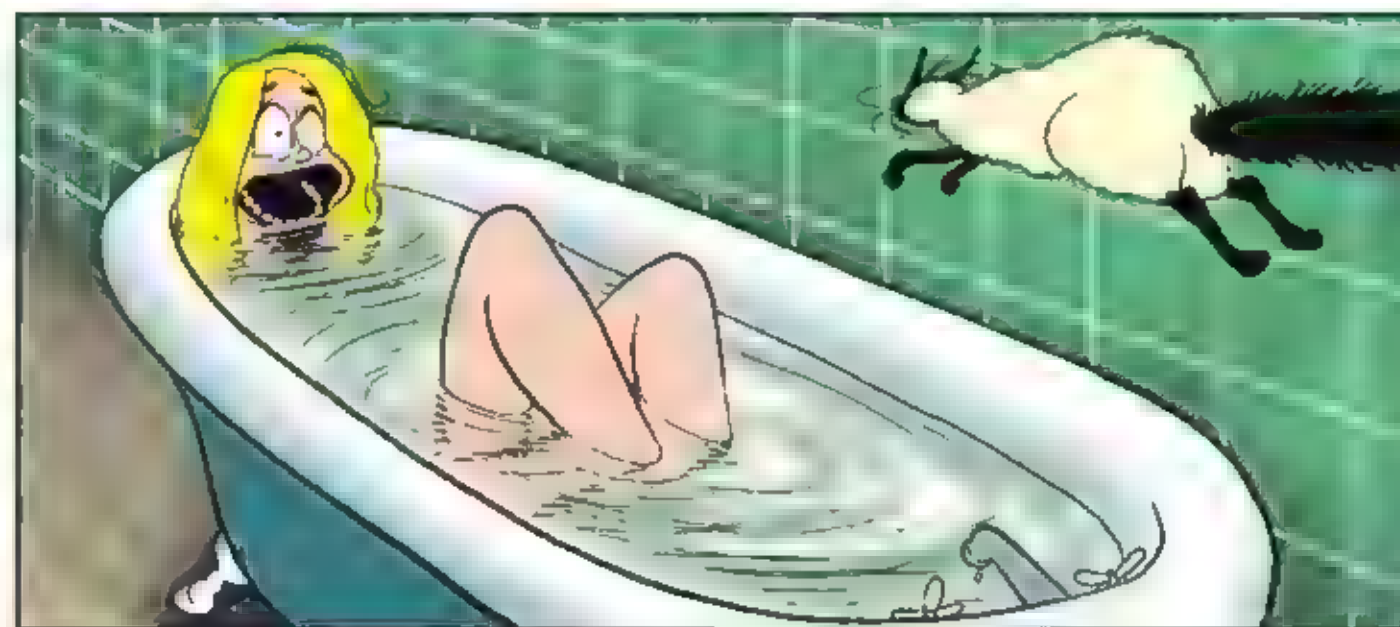
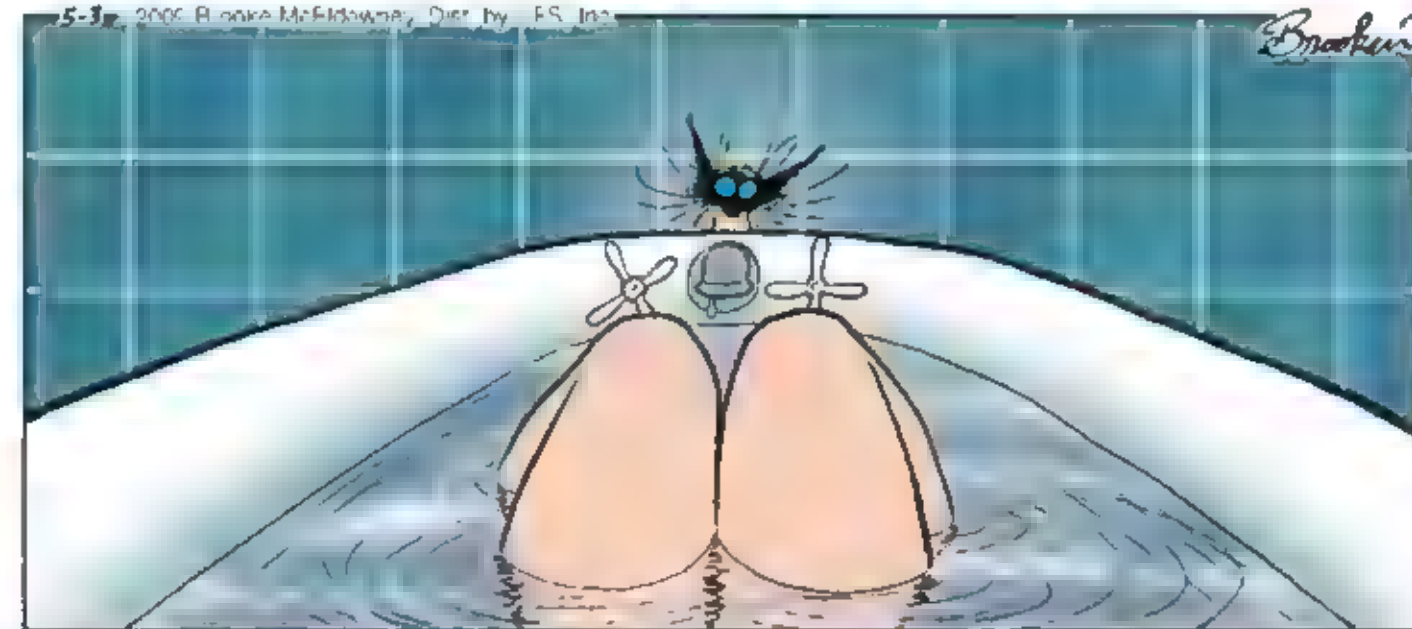
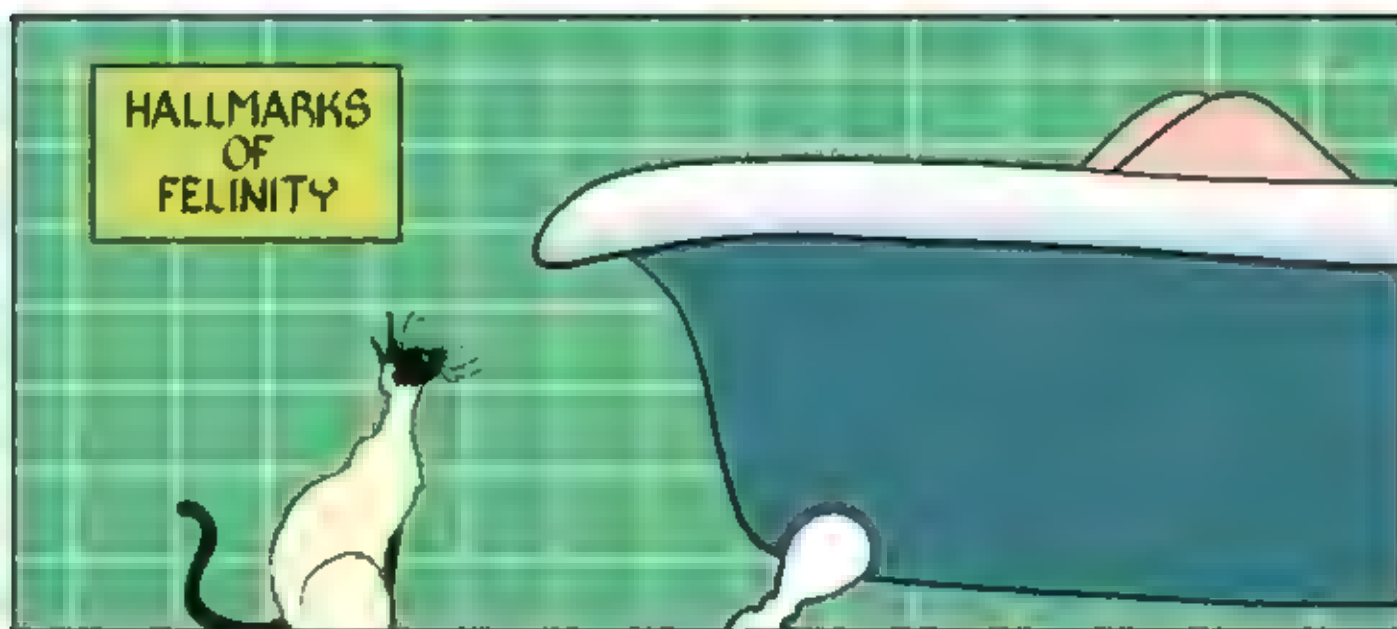
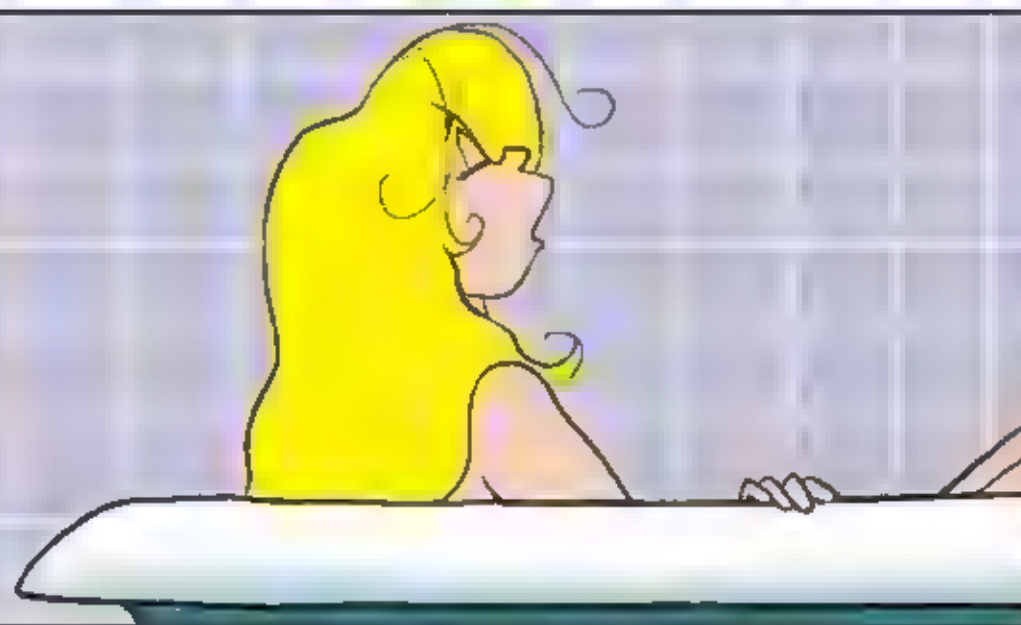
I JUST  
FELL IN  
LOVE WITH  
YOU AGAIN.

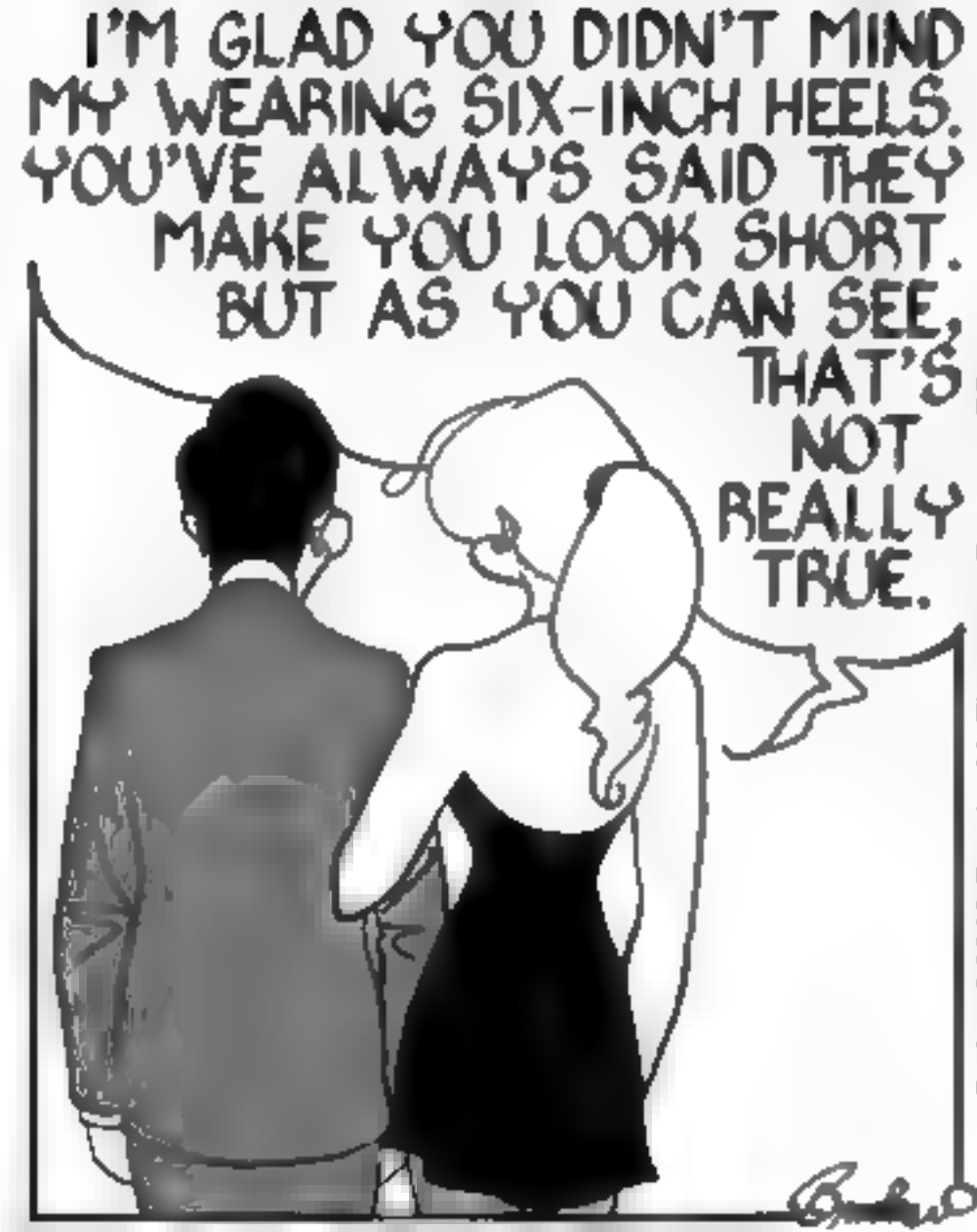
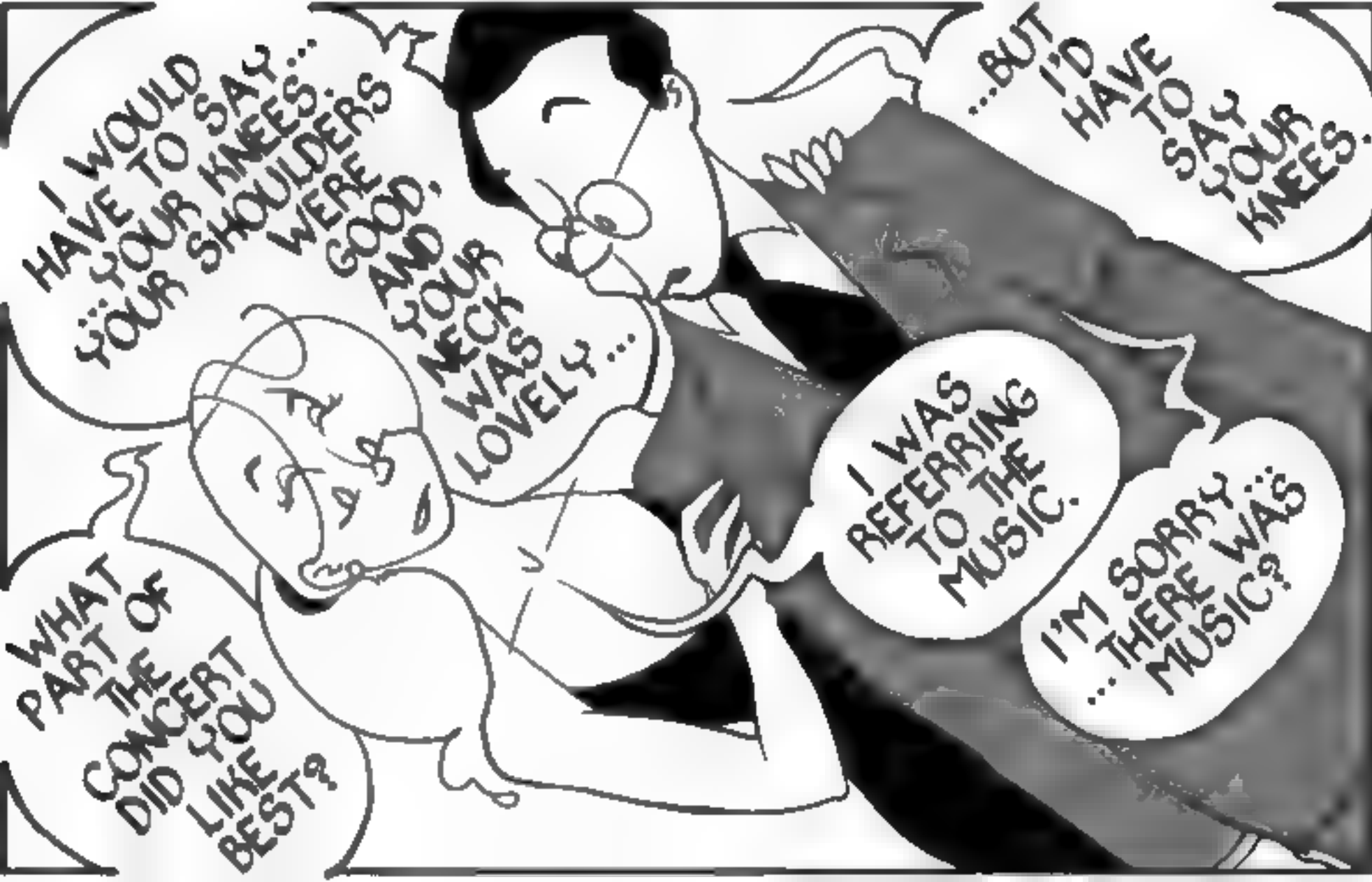
SO THAT'S  
YOUR SECRET.

I NEVER  
STOP  
FALLING.





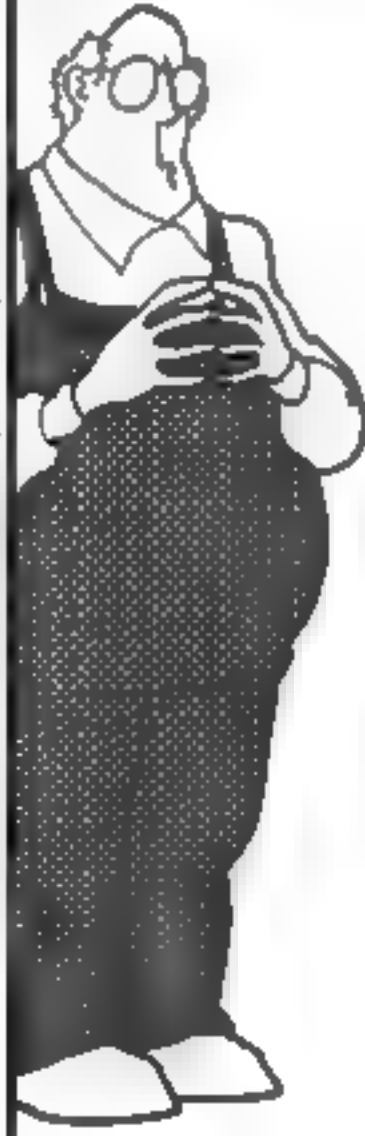








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*Brooke*



WHOOPS...



NOSE-BLEED.



Brooks



MY RIGHT AILERON IS  
MALFUNCTIONING...I CAN'T  
RETURN TO BASE!  
I'M GOING DOWN!



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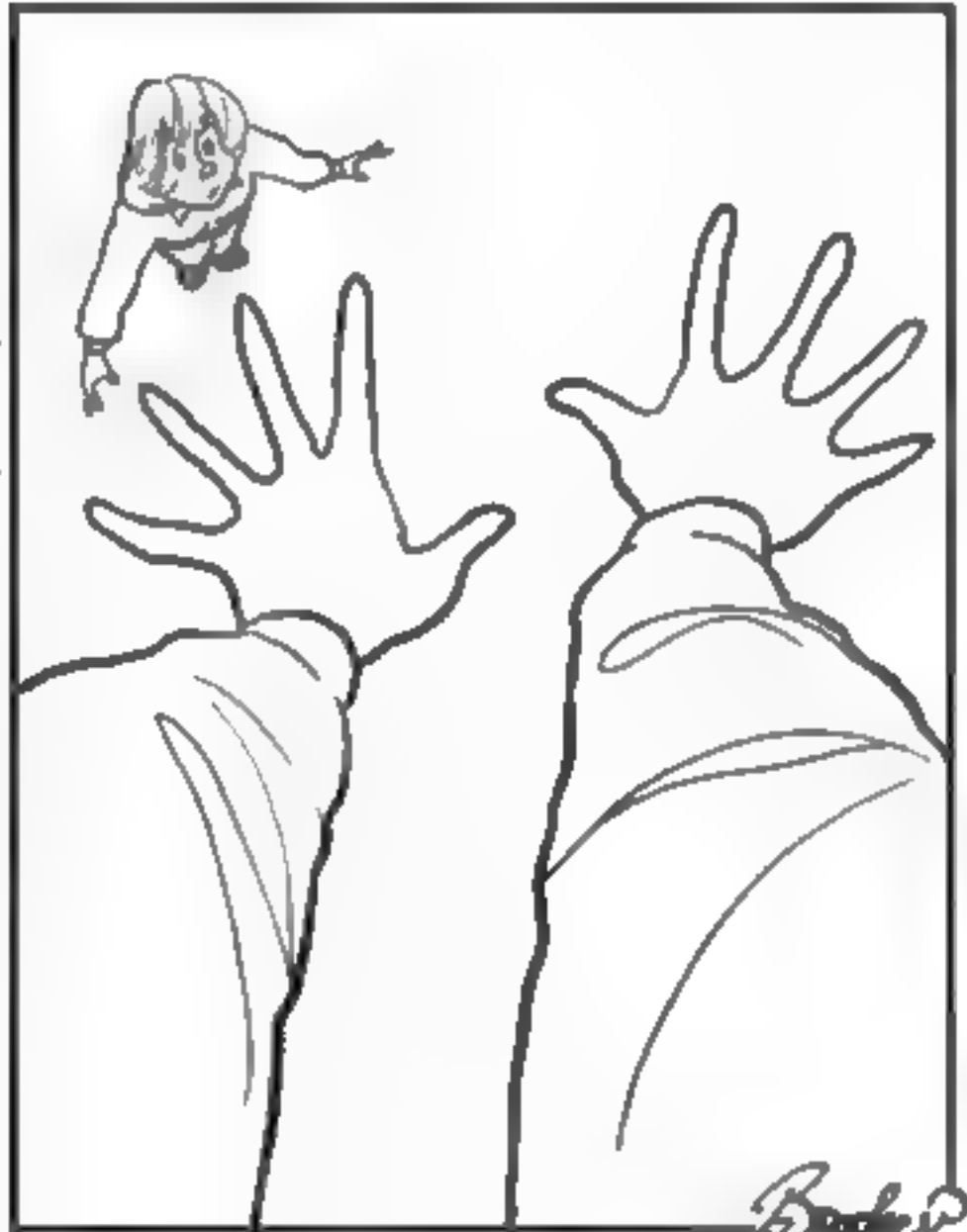
MAYDAY!  
MAYDAY!

oh,  
lord...



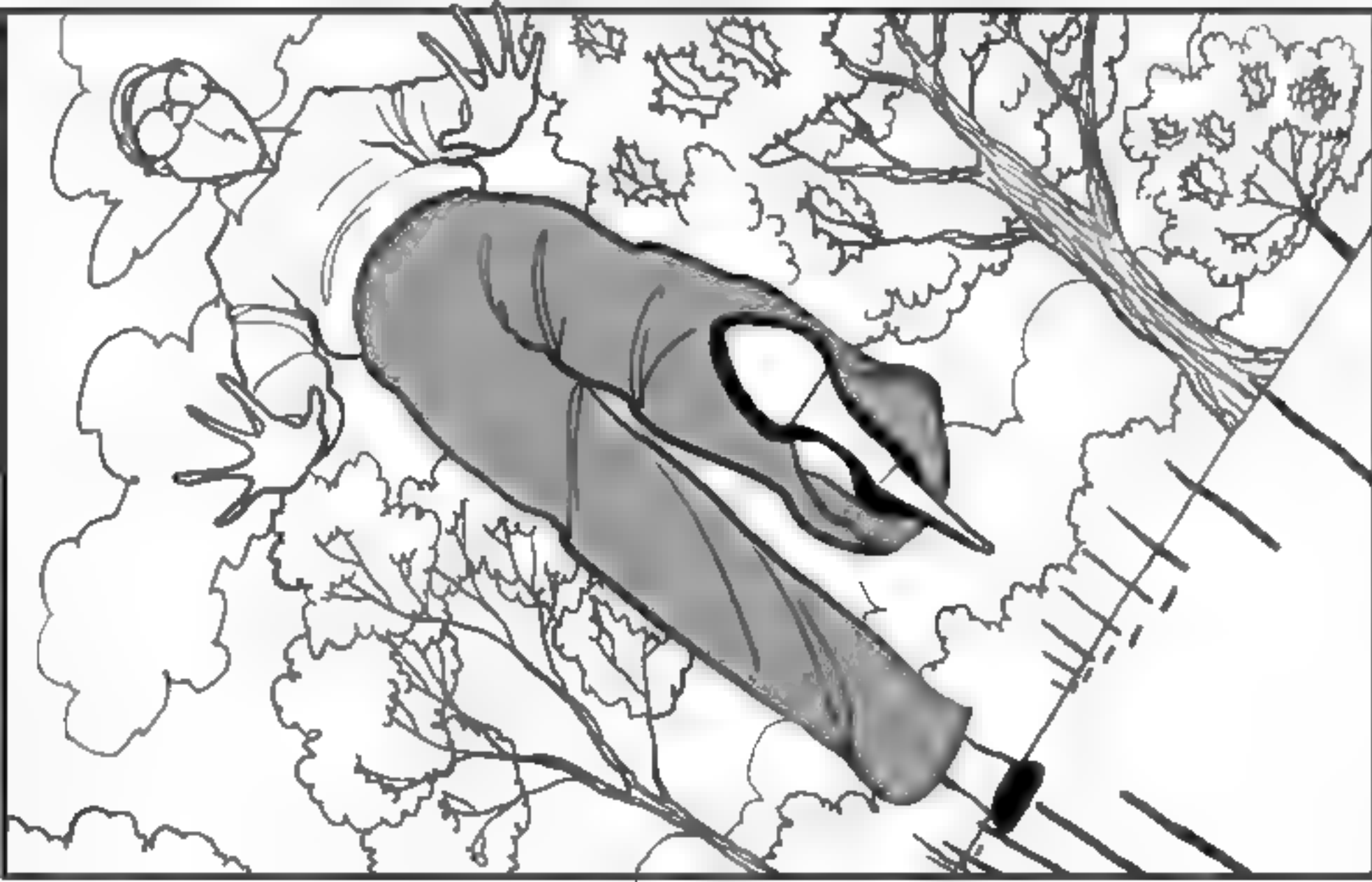


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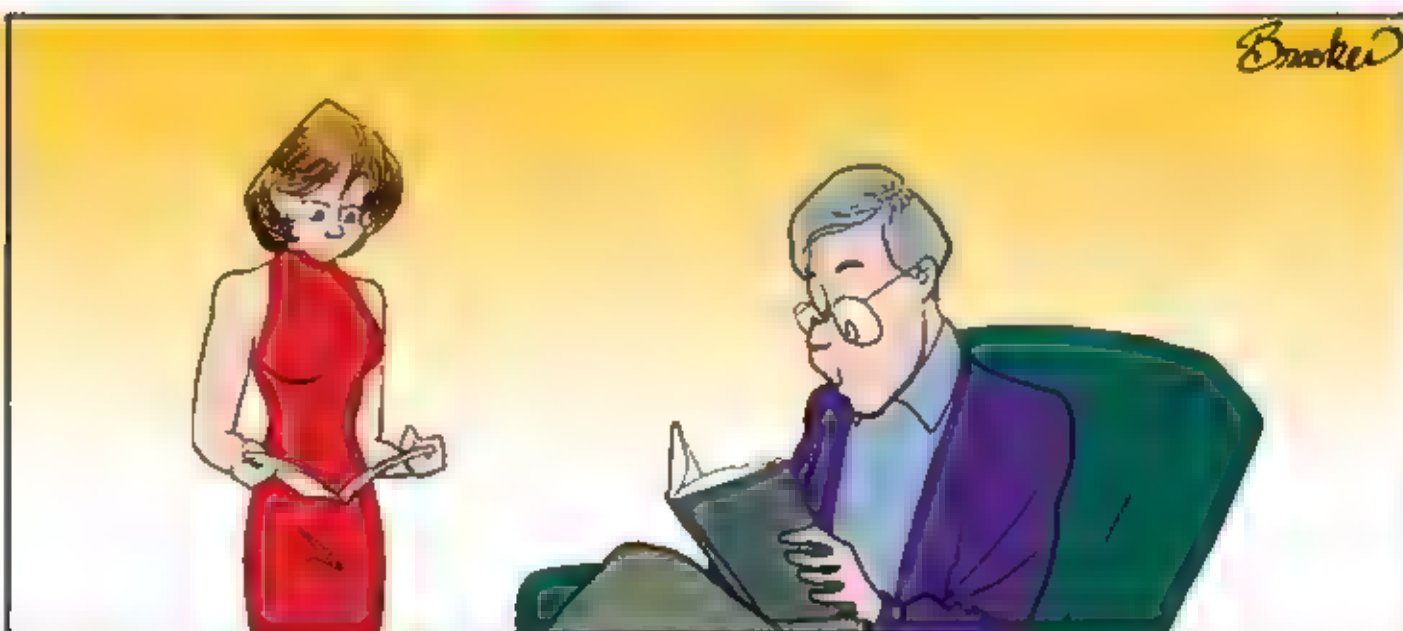
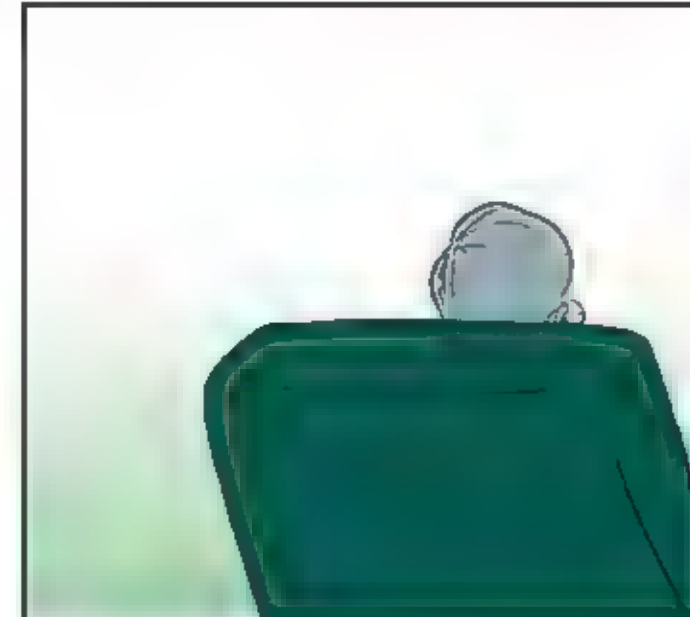
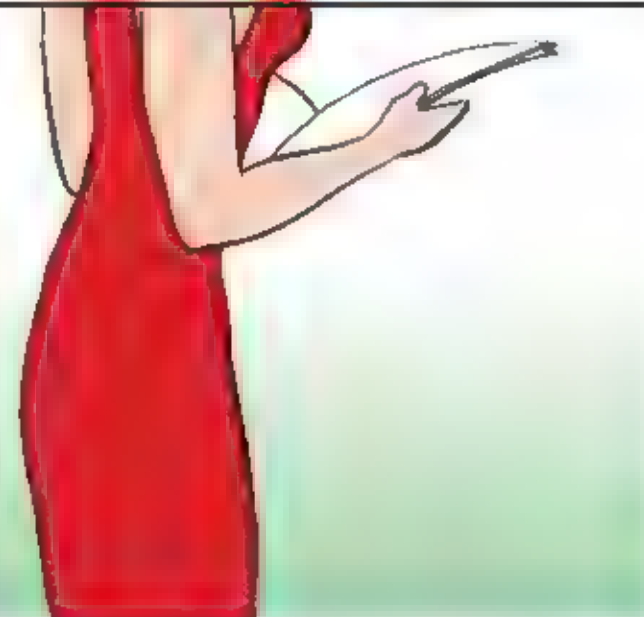


DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE  
WOMEN WEAR SIX-INCH  
HEELS WITHOUT PRACTICE?

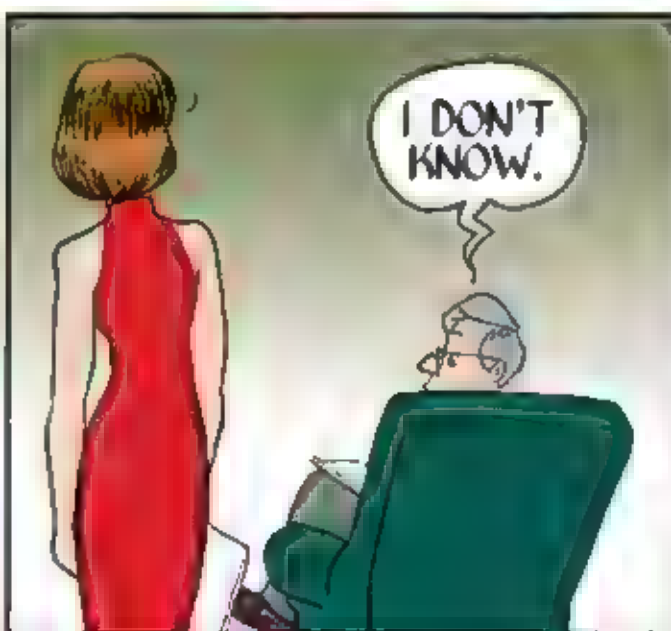




# 9 CHICKWEED LANE

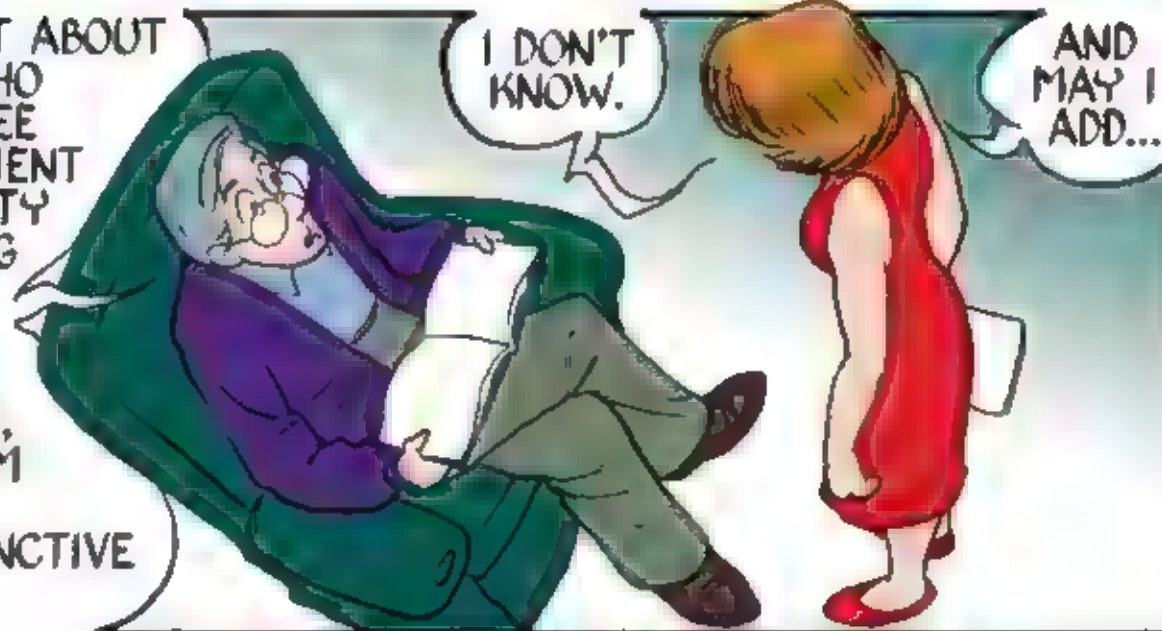


WHAT IS IT, DO YOU SUPPOSE, THAT CAUSES MEN OF A CERTAIN AGE TO LOSE THEIR MINDS, DITCH THEIR MARRIAGES AND TAKE TO WIFE FIRM, BOUNCY BARBIE DOLLS WITH BRAINS THE SIZE OF CARAWAY SEEDS?



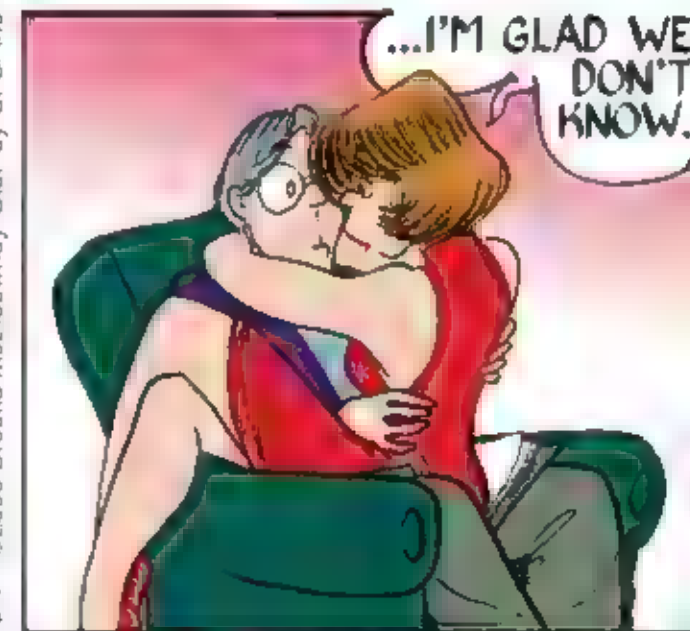
I DON'T KNOW.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT WOMEN WHO CANNOT SEE THE IMMANENT DESIRABILITY OF GREYING MEN WITH MODERATE PAUNCHES, TRIFOCALS, AND A FIRM GRASP OF THE SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD?



I DON'T KNOW.

AND MAY I ADD...



...I'M GLAD WE DON'T KNOW.

DID YOU BORROW ONE  
OF MY HIGH HEELS THE  
LAST TIME YOU VISITED  
HOME?



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WHY WOULD ANYONE  
BORROW JUST ONE  
HIGH HEEL?



Brooke



HELLO?  
...COME IN,  
GALACTIC  
CENTRAL.



THE  
BROTHERHOOD  
OF THE  
SIX-INCH  
HEELS

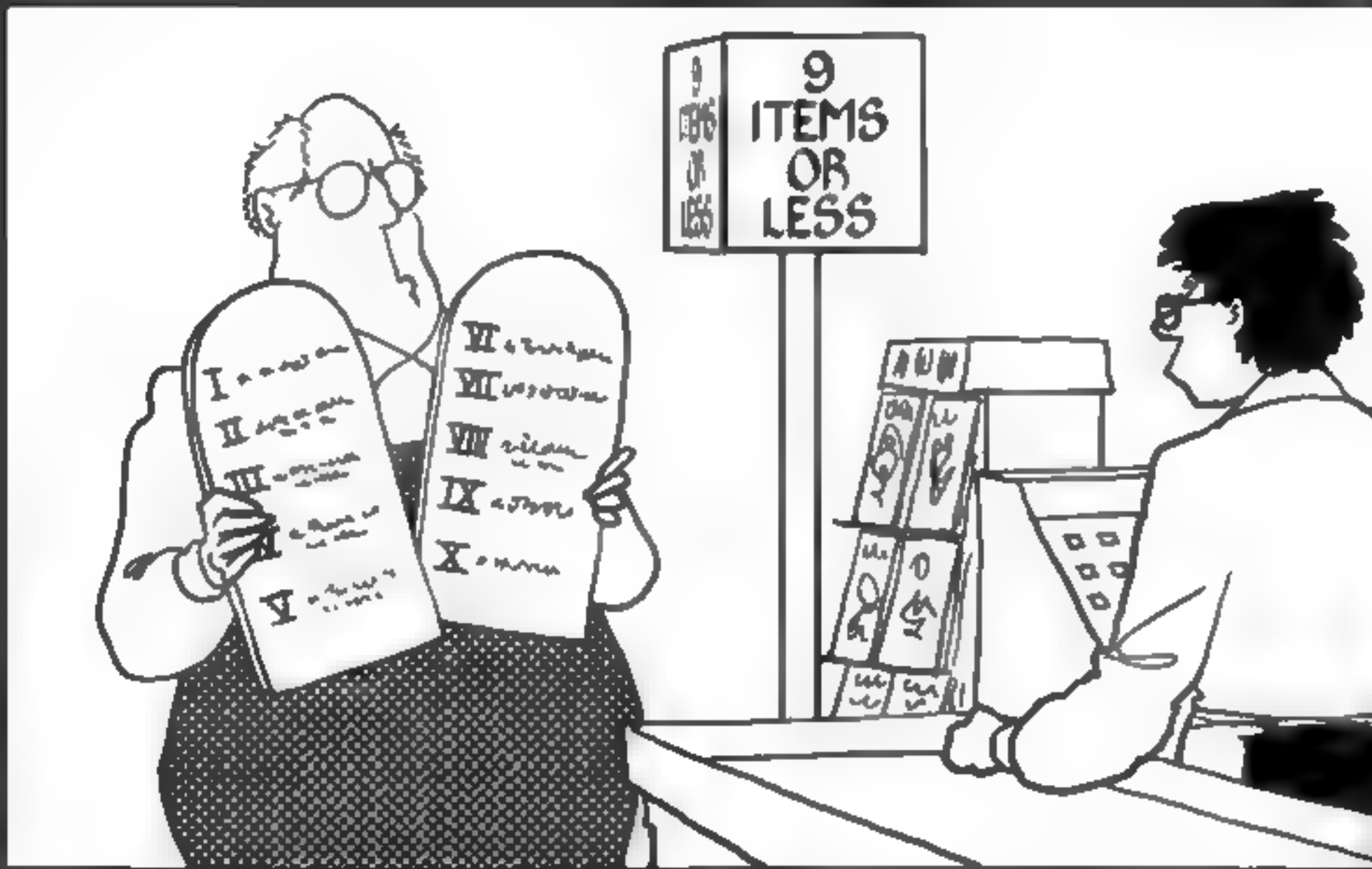
PLEASE  
KEEP OUR  
PARK CLEAN





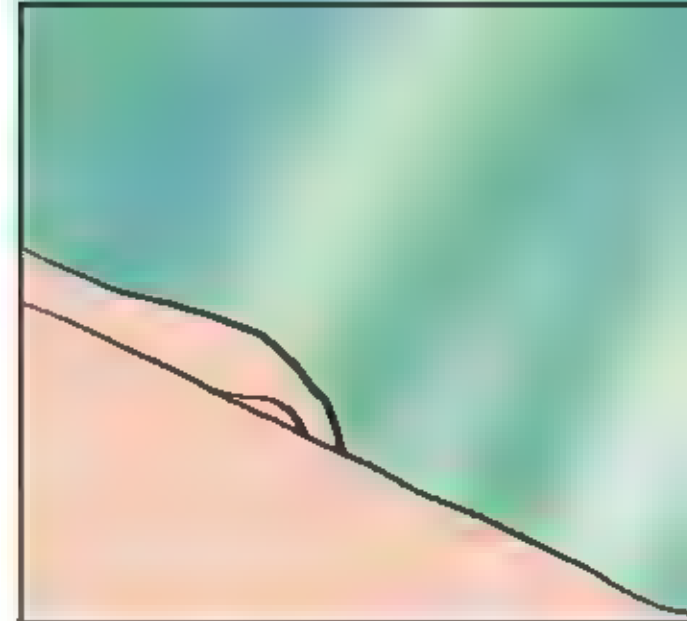






*Broken*

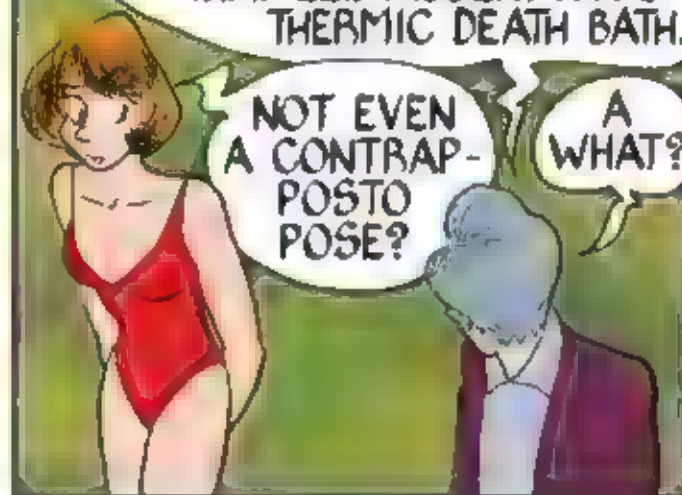




YOU'RE SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO JUMP IN WITH ME? EDDA GOT AMOS TO DO IT A COUPLE WEEKS AGO.



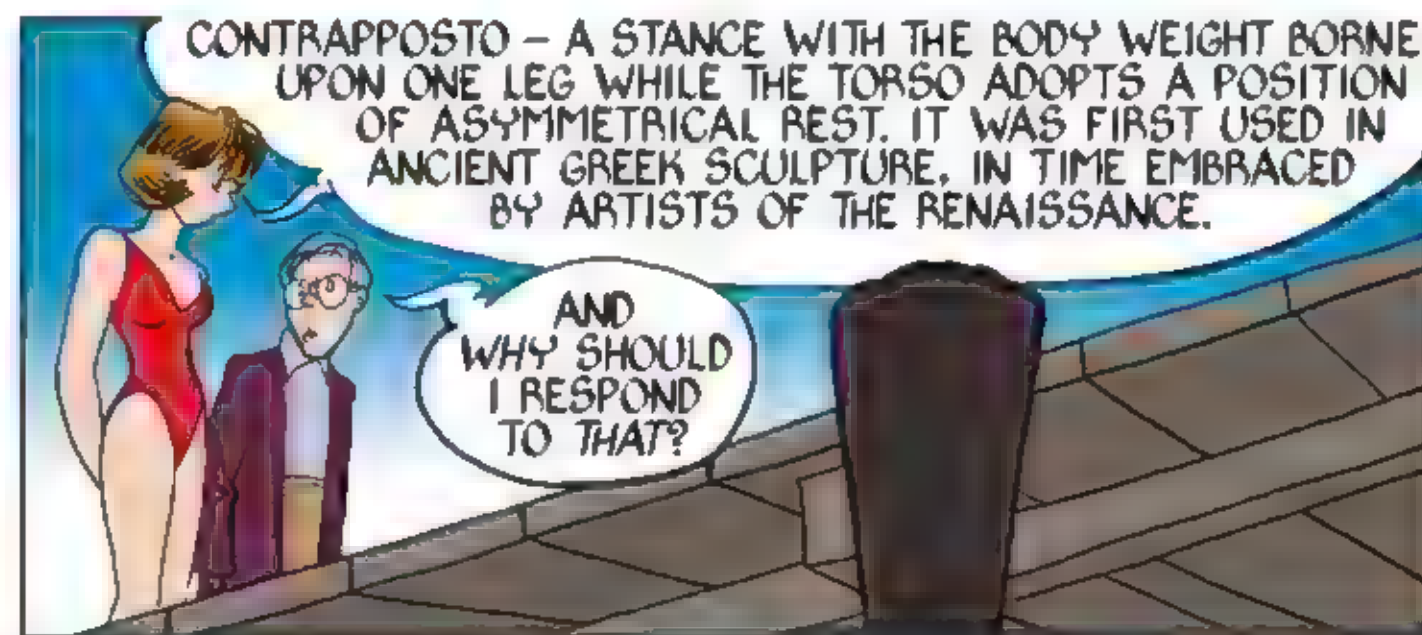
I'M SORRY...NOTHING COULD INDUCE ME TO PLUNGE INTO THAT EEL-RIDDEN, HYPOTHERMIC DEATH BATH.



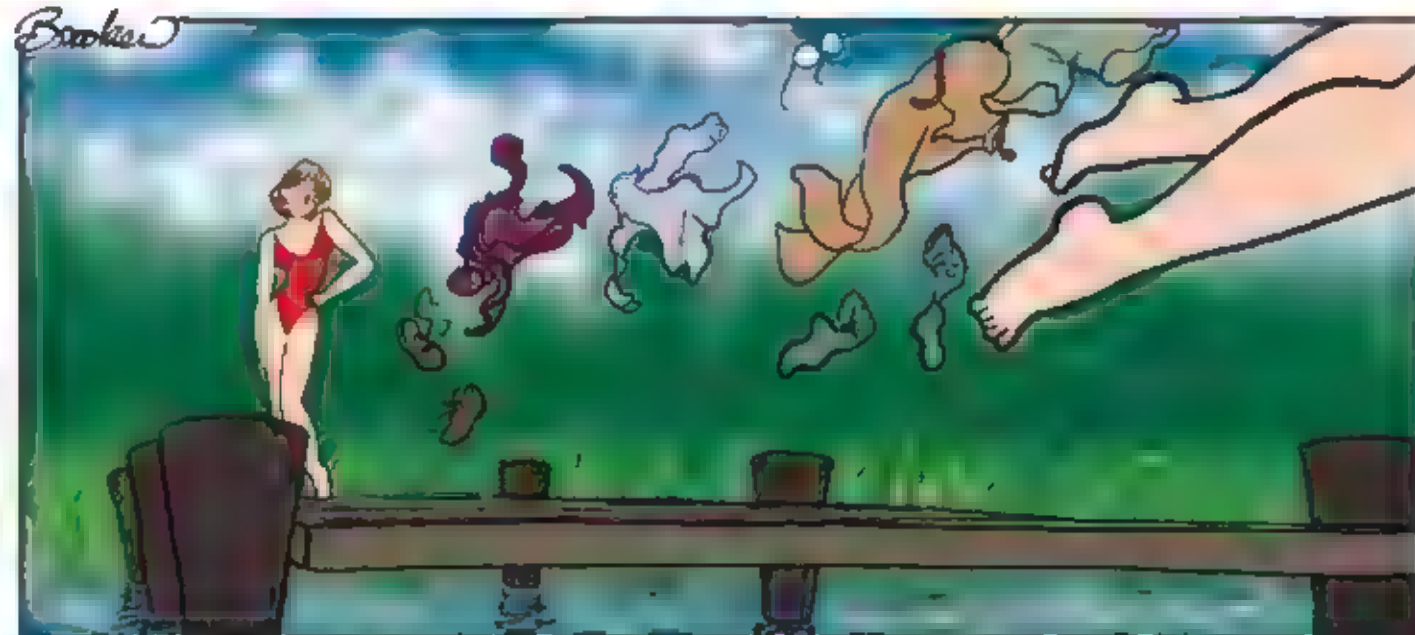
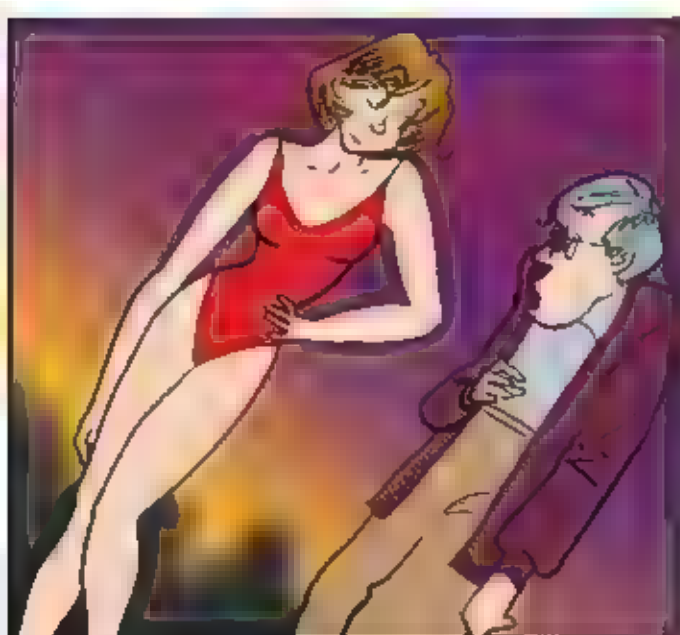
NOT EVEN A CONTRAPPOSTO POSE?

A WHAT?

CONTRAPPOSTO - A STANCE WITH THE BODY WEIGHT BORNE UPON ONE LEG WHILE THE TORSO ADOPTS A POSITION OF ASYMMETRICAL REST. IT WAS FIRST USED IN ANCIENT GREEK SCULPTURE, IN TIME EMBRACED BY ARTISTS OF THE RENAISSANCE.



AND WHY SHOULD I RESPOND TO THAT?



DID I MENTION THAT RITA HAYWORTH FURTHER DEVELOPED IT?

AH...  
...THAT RENAISSANCE.



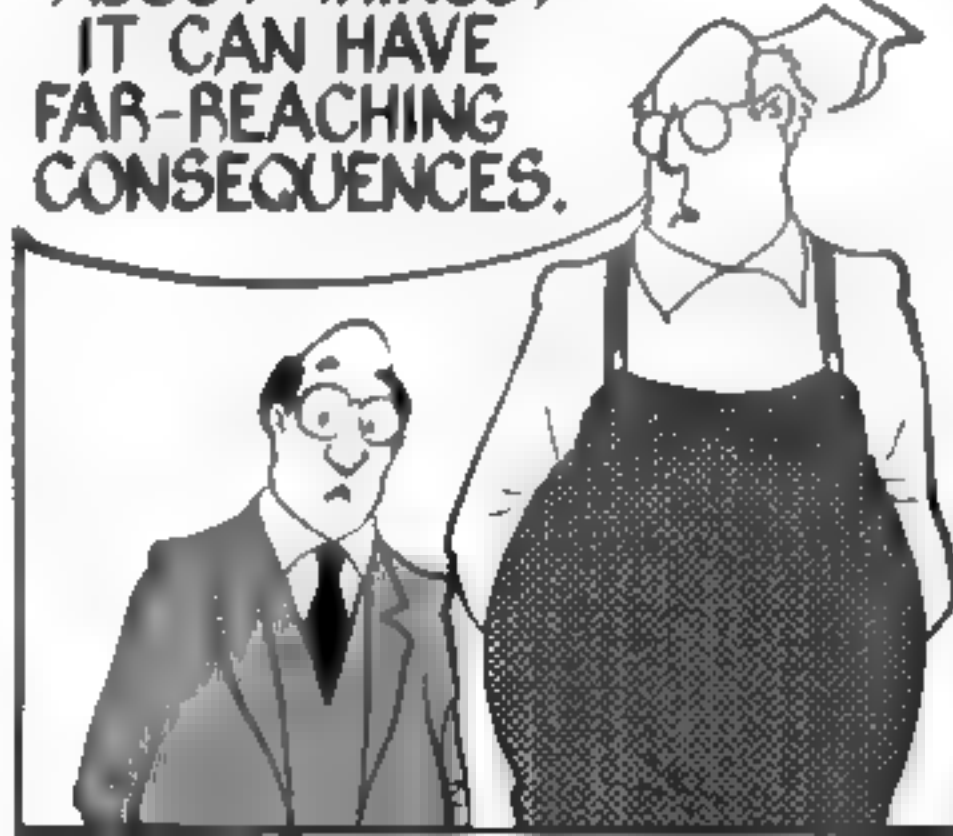


YOU'RE LOOKING  
DISTURBINGLY  
THOUGHTFUL  
TODAY,  
MONTY.

YOU  
SAY THAT  
AS IF IT'S  
A BAD  
THING.



MANY PEOPLE BELIEVE  
THAT THOUGHTFULNESS  
IS A GOOD QUALITY...  
...BUT WHEN AN ALMIGHTY  
BEING STARTS THINKING  
ABOUT THINGS,  
IT CAN HAVE  
FAR-REACHING  
CONSEQUENCES.



YOU'RE  
SAYING  
PEOPLE  
LIKE  
THEIR  
DEITIES  
STUPID?



TRADITIONALLY,  
YES.



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DEITIES...  
...AND, IF I'M  
NOT MISTAKEN,  
BLONDS.



Brooke

I SEE, MONTY, THAT YOU'RE  
PERSISTING IN PROFOUND  
REFLECTION.

JUST  
MULLING  
THINGS OVER.  
...YOU KNOW,  
THE COSMOS.



*Brubaker*

THAT'S THE PROBLEM...  
...ONE DAY YOU'RE MULLING  
THINGS OVER, THE NEXT  
DAY YOU WANT TO TWEAK  
THINGS, DO SOME SPRING  
CLEANING,  
REVISE  
CREATION...



WHAT'S  
WRONG  
WITH  
THAT?

A FEW LITTLE  
READJUSTMENTS  
FOR A GOD  
CAN BE  
CATAS-  
TROPHES  
FOR  
HUMAN  
BEINGS.



5-20  
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THAT'S THE THING WITH  
HUMAN BEINGS...  
...IT'S ALWAYS ABOUT  
THEM, ISN'T IT?

THERE YOU  
GO, THINKING  
AGAIN.





I'M SORRY, EDDA, MY CLOCK  
DIDN'T RING, I MISSED MY  
COMMUTER TRAIN, THE  
SUBWAY STALLED JUST  
BELOW 66TH STREET...



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...FOR THE LAST FEW DAYS,  
NO MATTER WHAT I'VE DONE,  
THE ONLY CONSISTENT  
THING I CAN SAY ABOUT  
MYSELF IS THAT I'VE BEEN  
LATE.



Brooke



...um...

...exactly...

...how late?

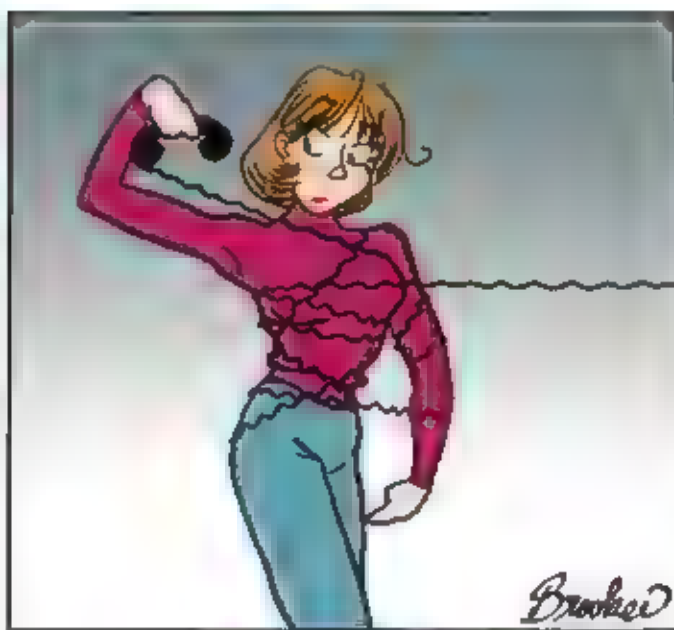
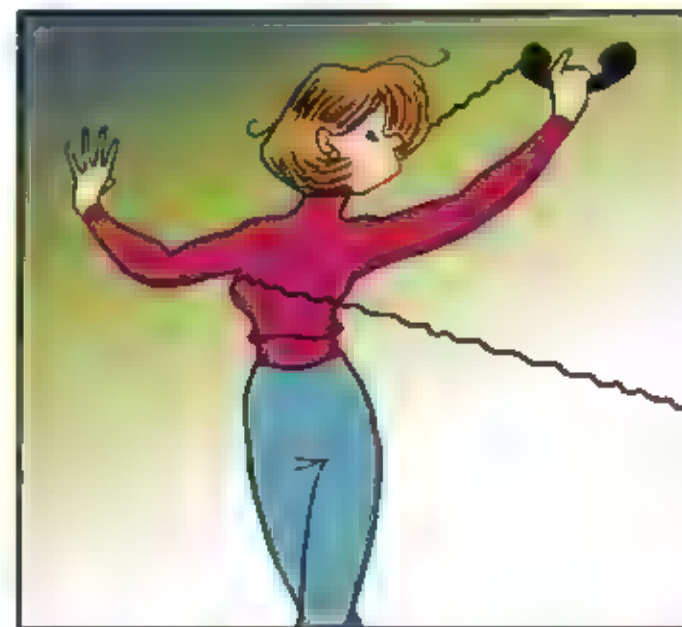
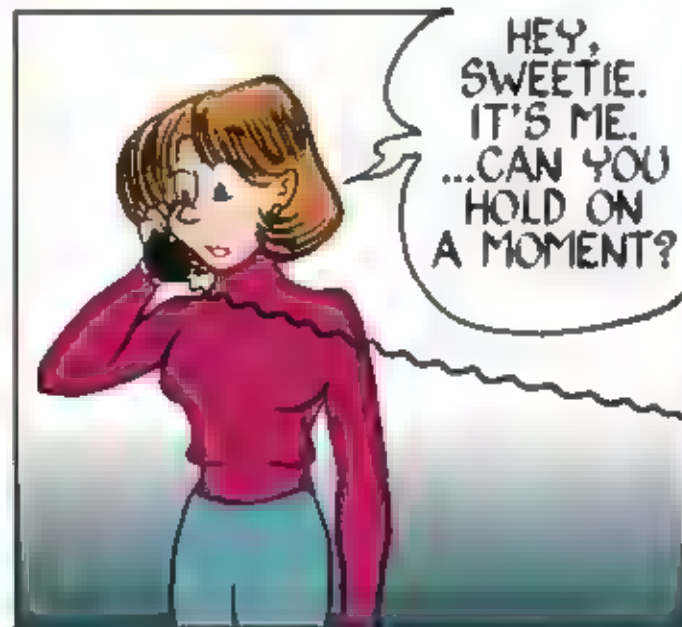
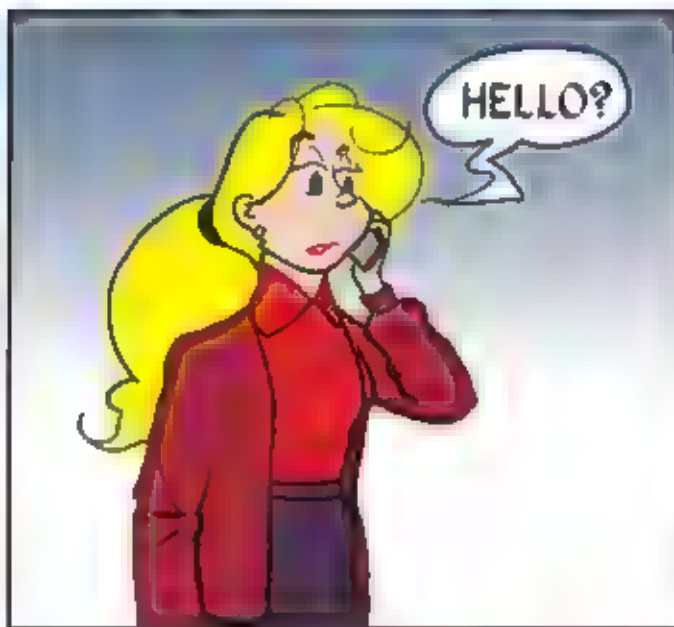






# 9 CHICKWEED LANE

®



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I JUST DELIVERED A NOTE  
TO FRANCIS. DIANE LEFT  
TOWN FOR NEW HAMPSHIRE,  
AND SHE WANTS  
HIM TO  
MEET  
HER  
THERE.



WHY?

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SHE HAS BIG NEWS AND  
SHE WANTS TO BREAK IT  
TO HIM WHERE THEY FIRST  
MET.

WHAT  
IS HER  
NEWS?



I...I CAN'T UNDERSTAND  
WHAT YOU'RE  
WHISPERING.  
ALL I FEEL  
ARE YOUR  
LIPS ON  
MY EAR  
AND YOUR  
BREATH  
AGAINST  
MY...  
AGAINST  
MY...



Brooke's





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WHEN YOU SAY YOU'RE  
GOING TO RETHINK YOUR  
CREATION OF HUMANITY,  
IN WHAT RESPECT  
ARE YOU  
GOING  
TO DO  
SO?



ONLY IN  
THE RESPECTS  
THAT COMMAND  
THEIR WAKING  
THOUGHTS AND  
ACTIONS.

THEIR COVETOUSNESS AND  
LUST; THEIR INTOLERANCE,  
COWARDICE, HATRED AND  
CRUELTY; THEIR SANCTIMONY,  
MENDACITY AND THIEVERY;  
AND THEIR INTENSE,  
FECKLESS,  
VOYEURISTIC  
LOVE OF  
MEDIOCRITY.  
...AT LEAST  
FOR STARTERS.

Brooke



THAT  
MAY BE  
AN EXTREME  
WAY TO  
PORTRAY  
THEM.

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IT'S THE ONLY WAY  
THEY PORTRAY  
THEMSELVES.  
READ A NEWSPAPER.





I WONDER WHAT THORAX  
AND THAT LITTLE MAN  
FIND TO DISCOURSE  
ABOUT AT SUCH  
LENGTH.

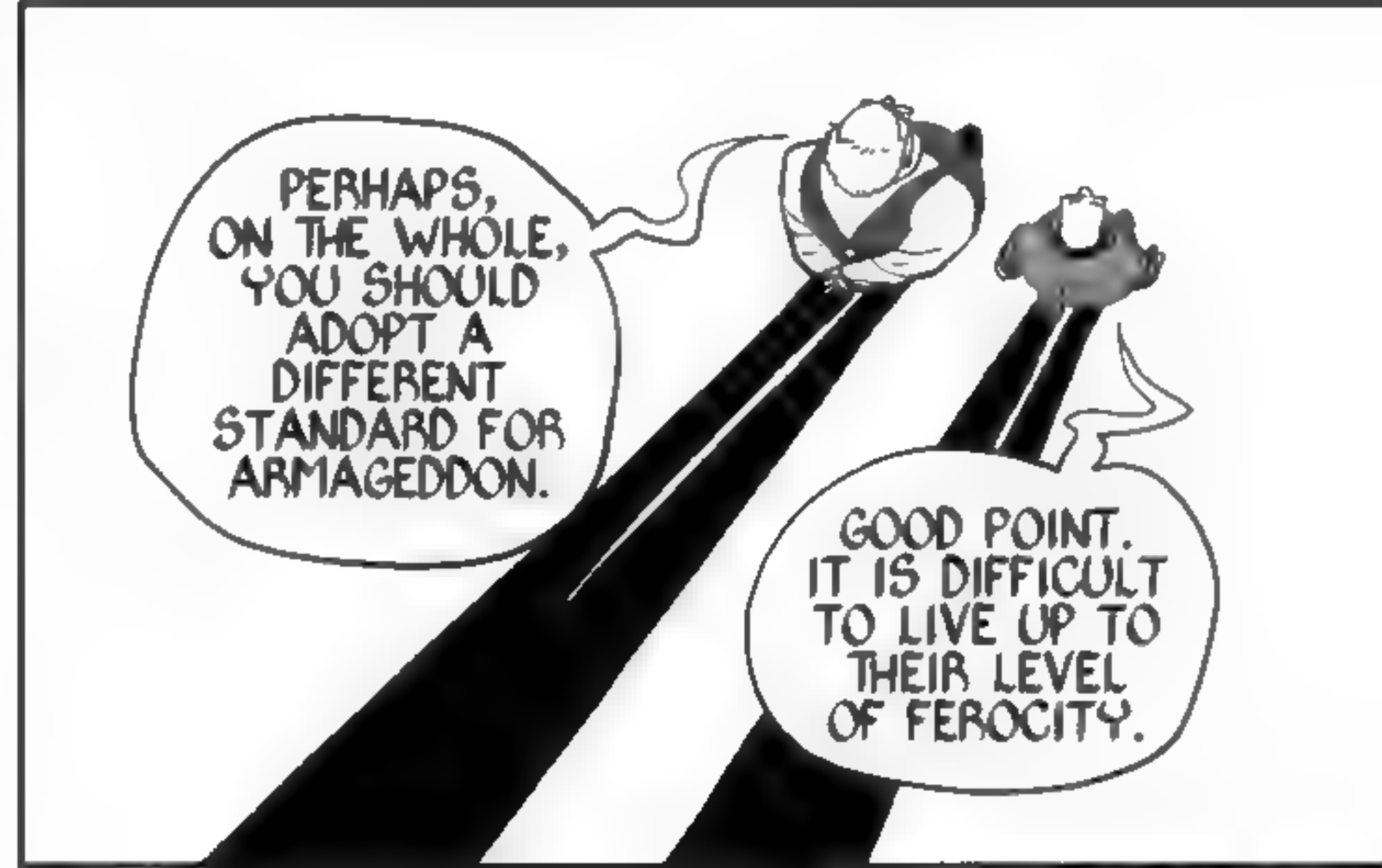
WHO CARES?  
...AS LONG AS IT KEEPS  
THEM BUSY, WE CAN  
GET ON WITH OUR  
LIVES.



*Brooke*

SO WHAT'S IT TO BE?  
...THE COMPLETE ANNIHILATION  
OF HUMANKIND, OR JUST A  
SEVERE REDUCTION IN  
THEIR NUMBERS?

LET'S TRY  
ROCK-PAPER-  
SCISSORS?



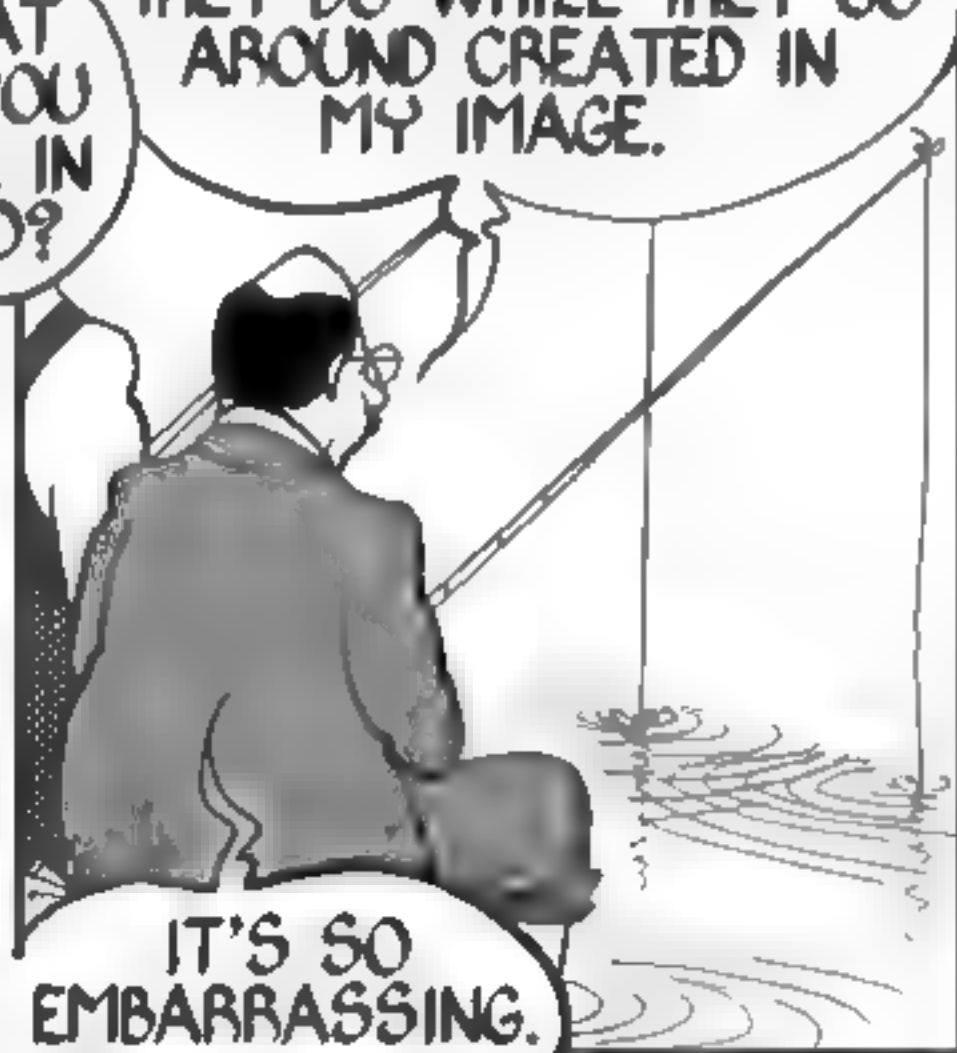
I'VE DECIDED ON A DIFFERENT  
STYLE OF ARMAGEDDON...  
...I'M GOING TO REVISE  
THE HUMAN RACE, NOT  
ANNIHILATE  
THEM.



WHAT  
DO YOU  
HAVE IN  
MIND?

WHAT HAS ALWAYS IRKED  
ME IS THAT THEY DO WHAT  
THEY DO WHILE THEY GO  
AROUND CREATED IN  
MY IMAGE.

IT'S SO  
EMBARRASSING.



SO I'M GOING TO CHANGE  
THE RACE TO LOOK LIKE  
COCKROACHES...ONE BIRTH  
AT A TIME. IN A FEW  
GENERATIONS, THE  
TRANSFORMATION  
WILL BE  
COMPLETE.



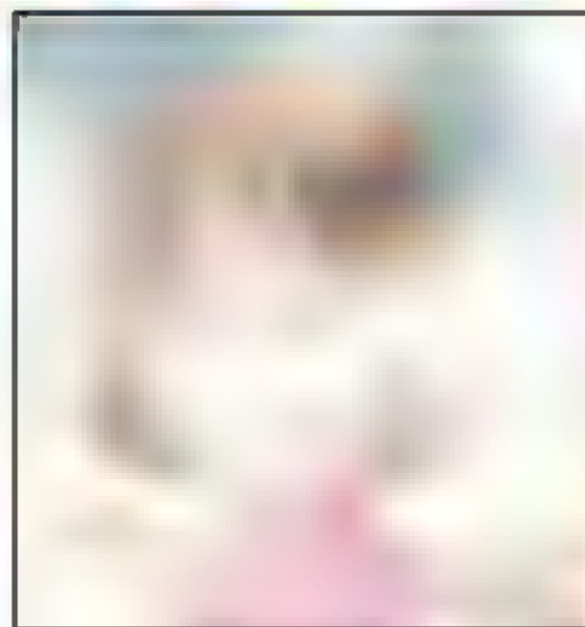
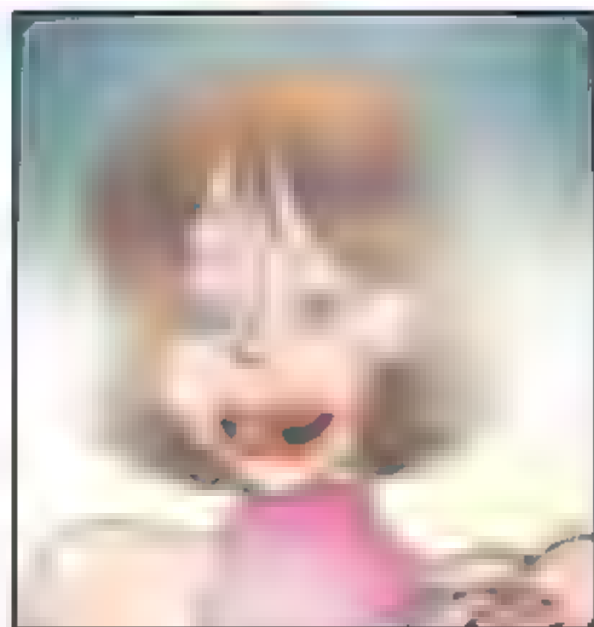
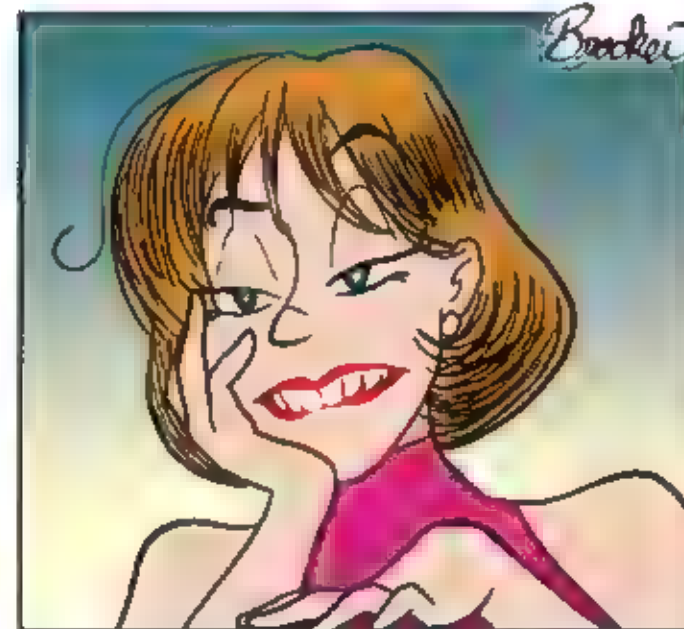
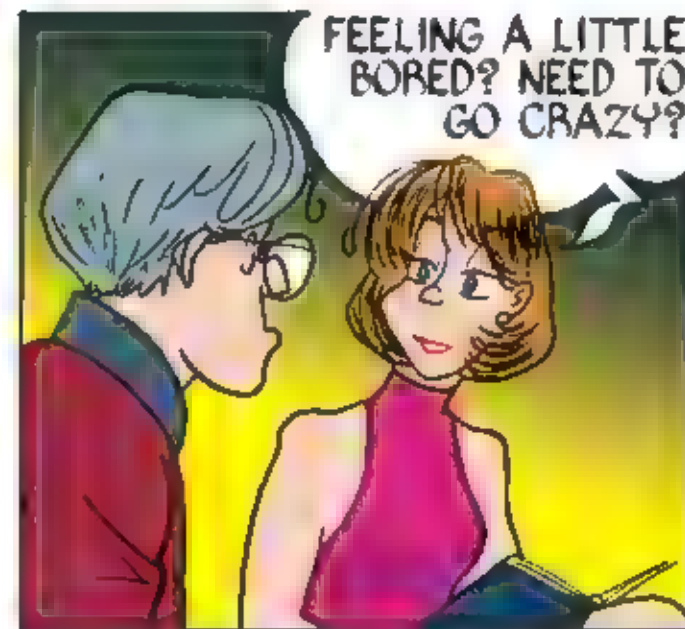
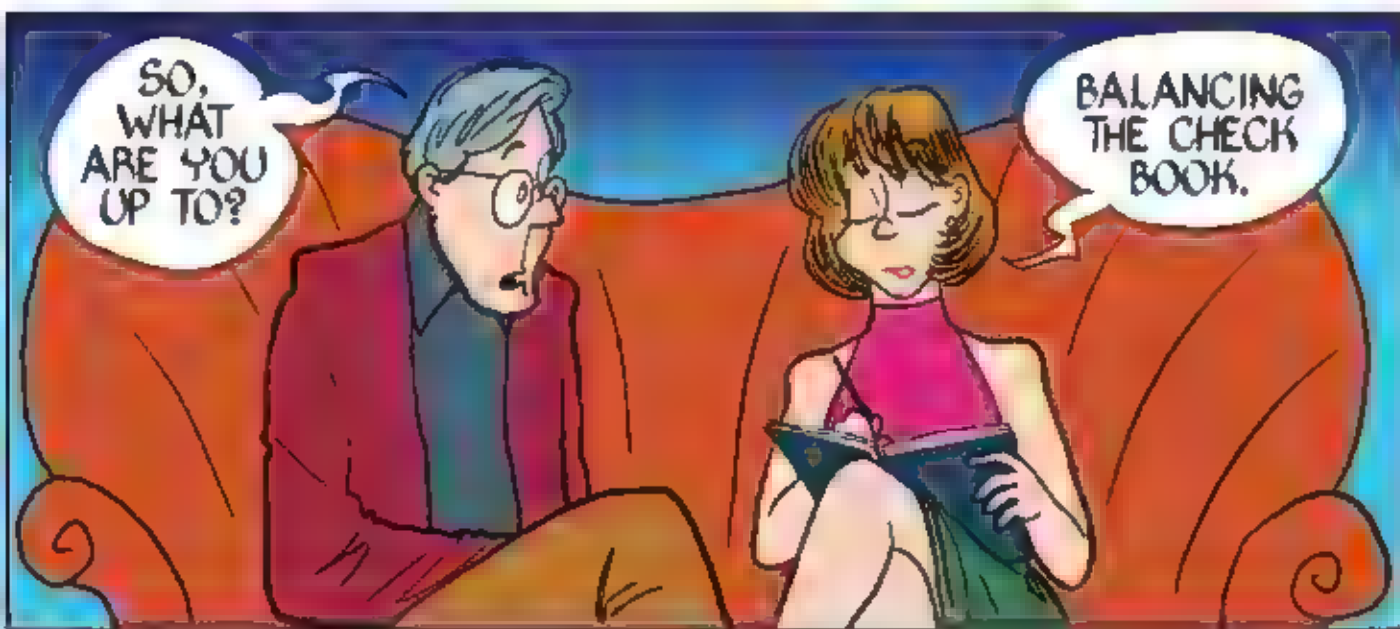
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AND  
I'M  
STARTING  
WITH  
HER.

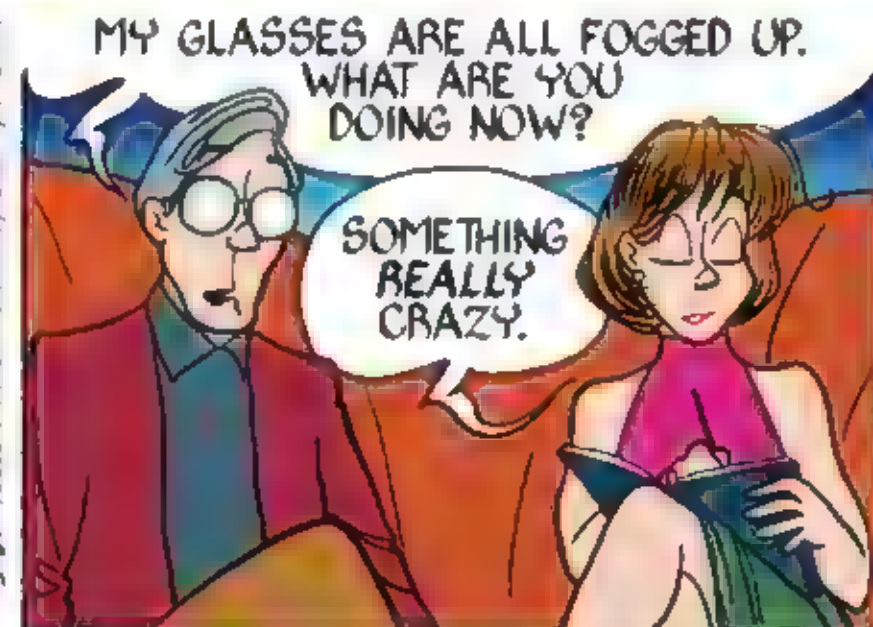


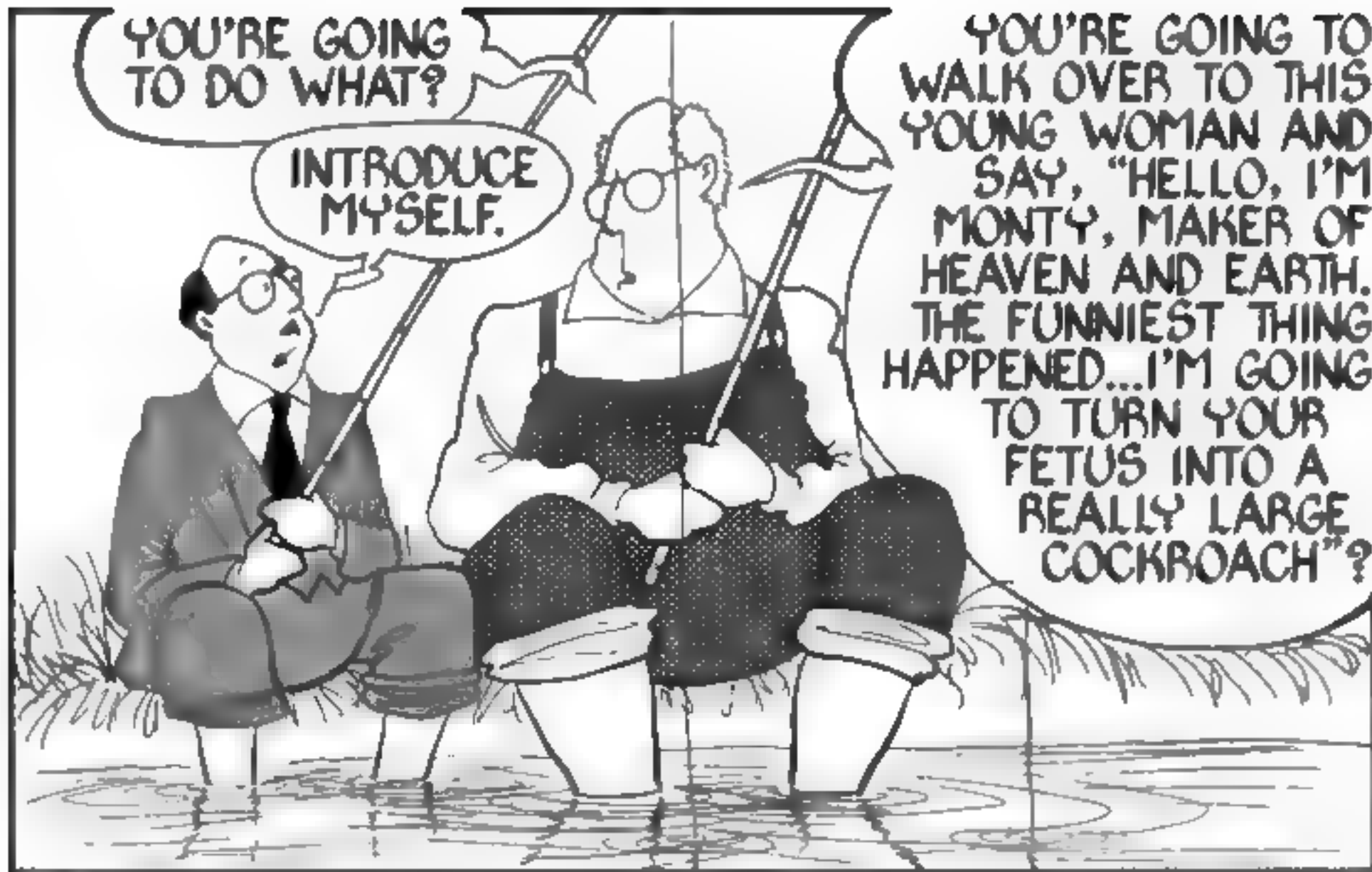
Brooke





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I SUPPOSE THERE ARE TWO  
POSSIBLE SCENARIOS HERE.  
1. A FORMER NUN, CHOSEN  
FOR AN EPIPHANIC  
AUDIENCE, AN  
ANNUNCIATION IF  
YOU WILL, WITH THE  
ALMIGHTY CREATOR  
OF THE UNIVERSE,  
WILL BE  
OVERWHELMED...

...OR, 2. IN A BURST  
OF ADRENALINE AT BEING  
TOLD THAT SHE IS TO  
BE THE PROGENITOR  
OF A NEW RACE OF  
SAPIENT COCKROACHES,  
SHE WILL LAY HANDS  
UPON THE ALMIGHTY  
AND NEARLY DROWN  
HIM IN THE LAKE.

Brooke

WE  
HAVE A  
2.



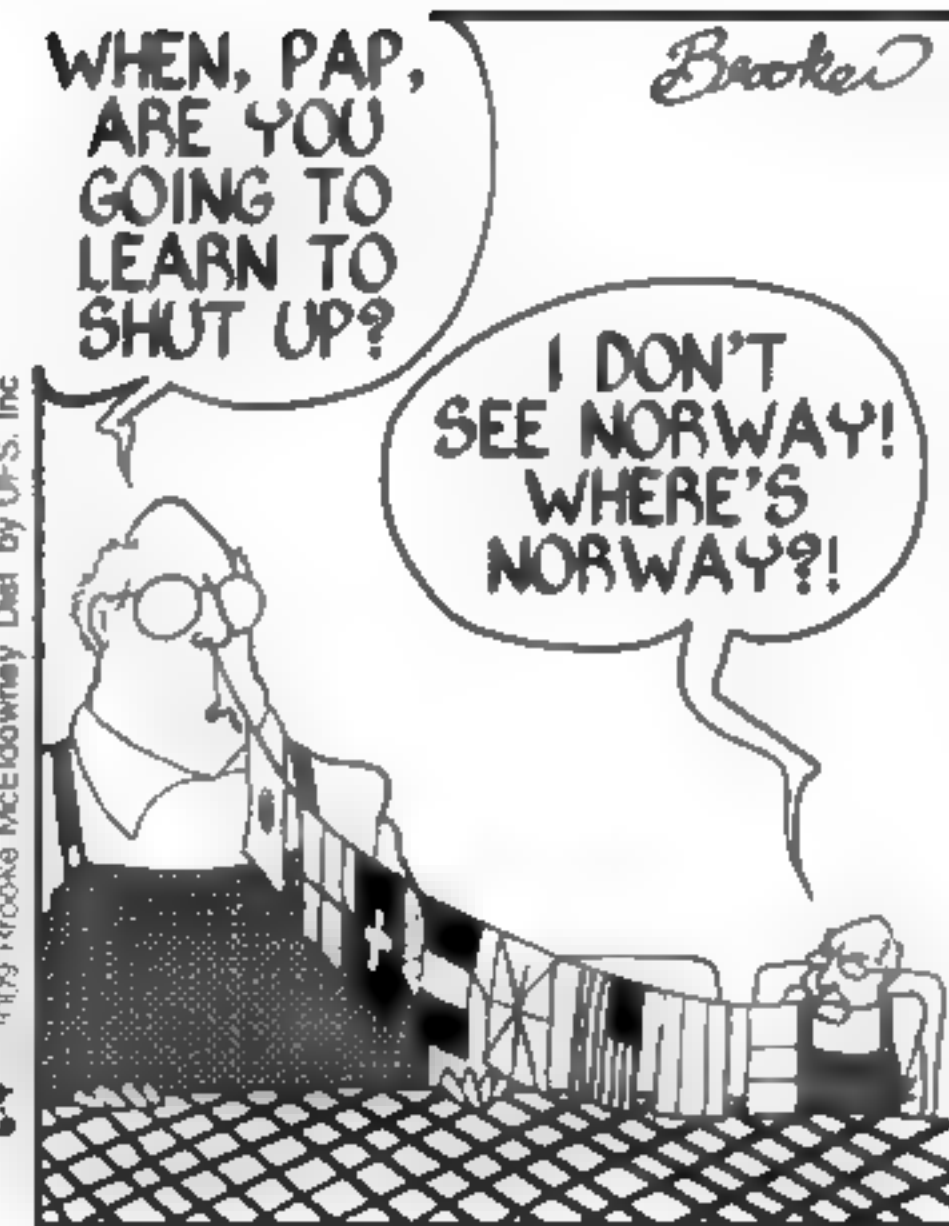
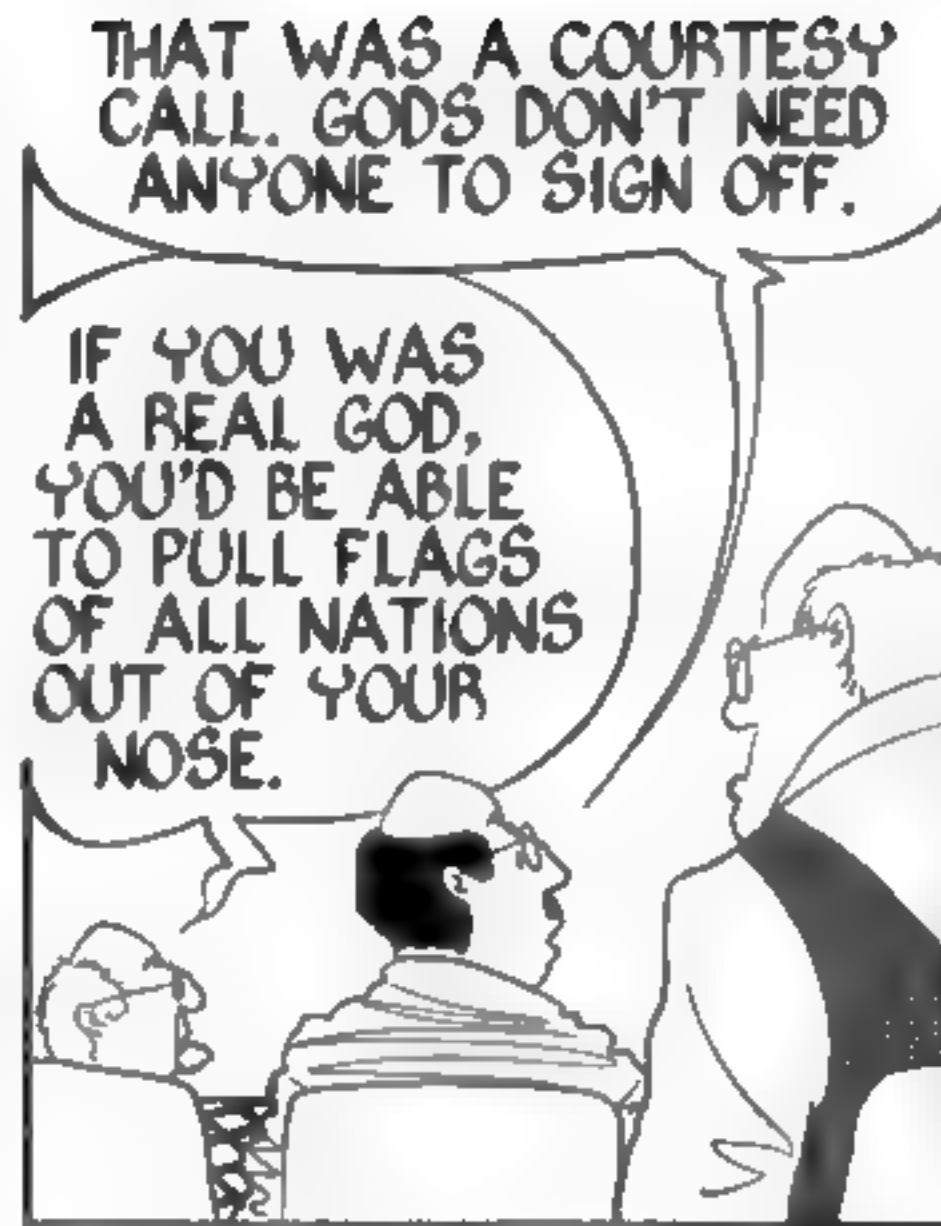
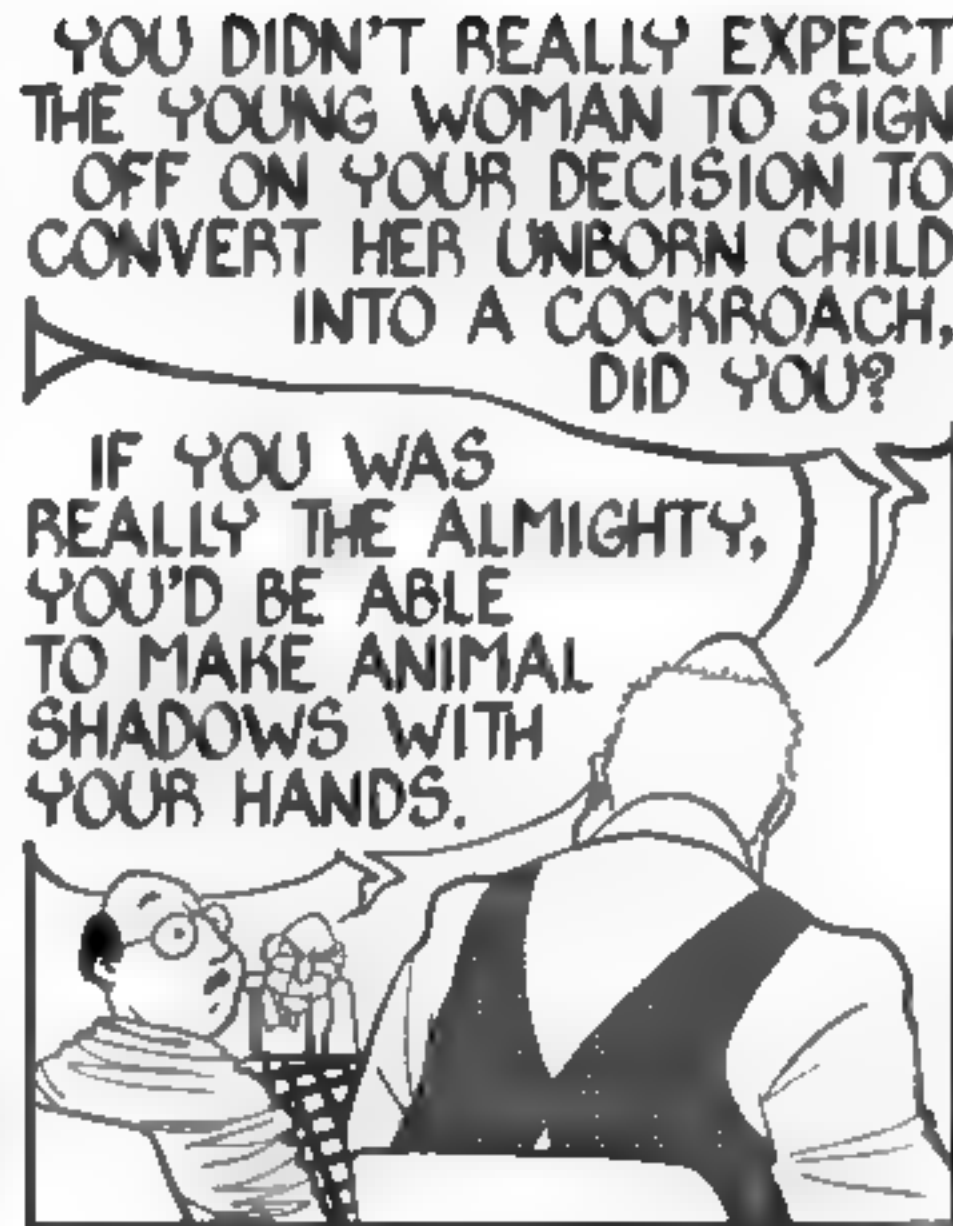
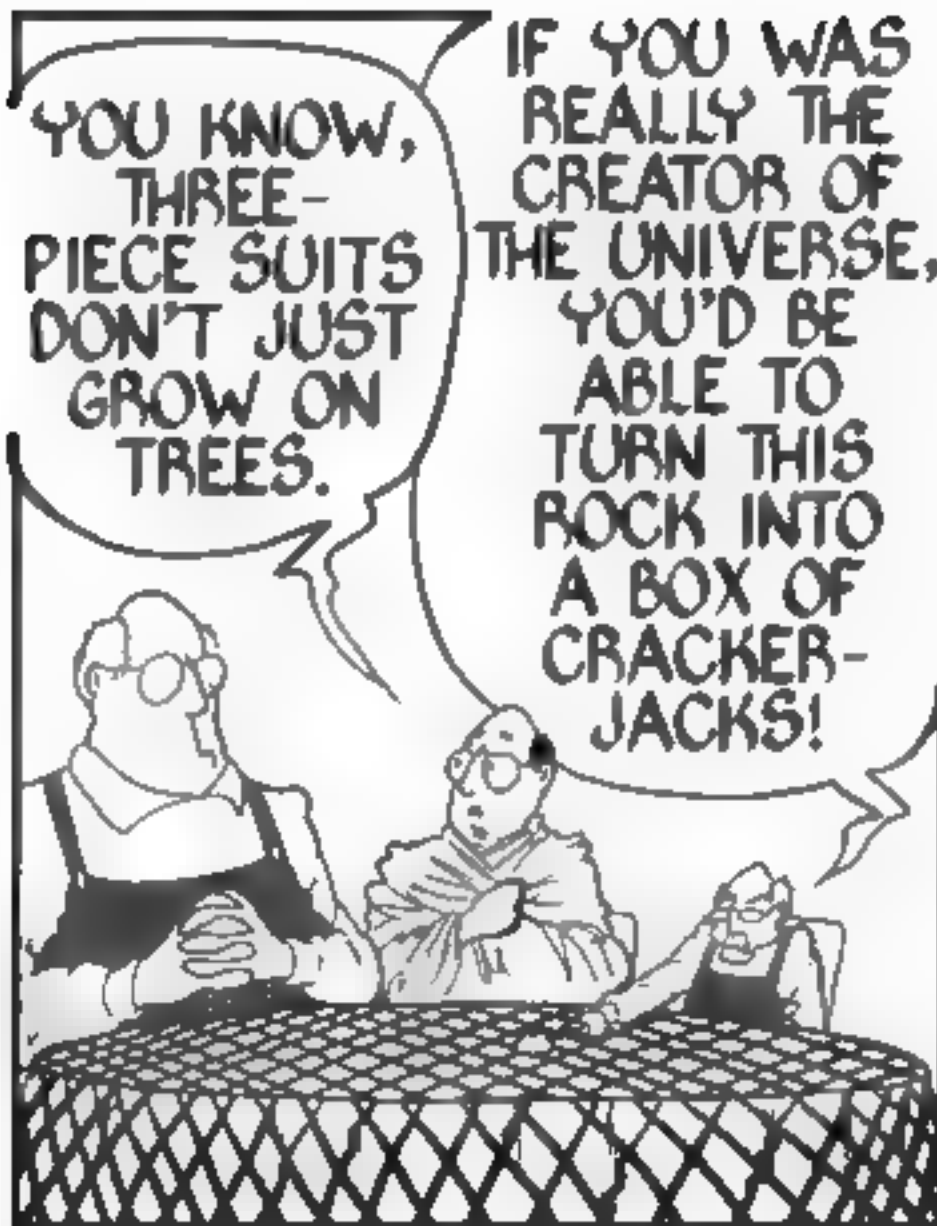
Brooke

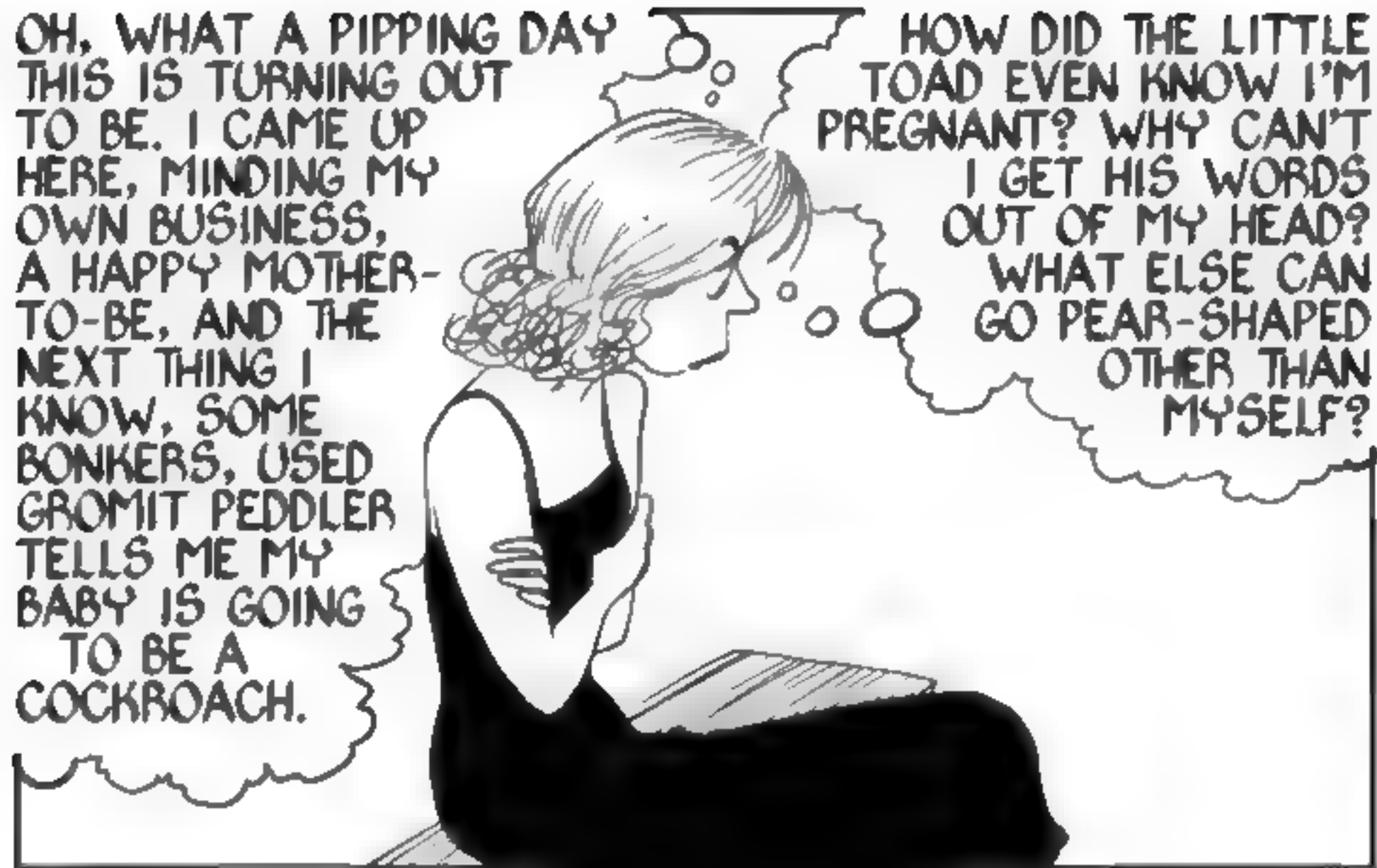
I CAN'T HELP BUT POINT OUT  
THAT YOU COMMITTED A RASH  
ACT HERE. OF COURSE, WHEN  
WE LOOK BACK ON THIS DAY,  
WE'RE BOTH GOING  
TO LAUGH.



ON THE OTHER HAND, I MAY  
BE WRONG. GODS ARE NOT  
KNOWN FOR THEIR SENSE  
OF HUMOR.

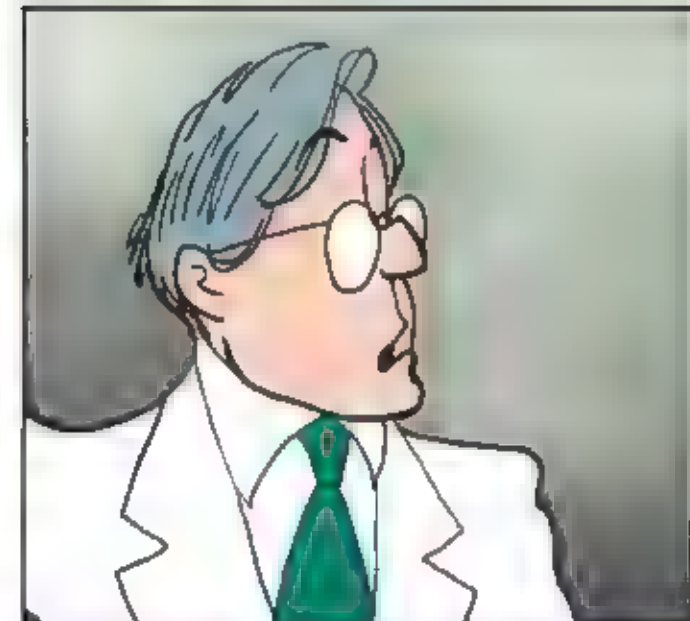
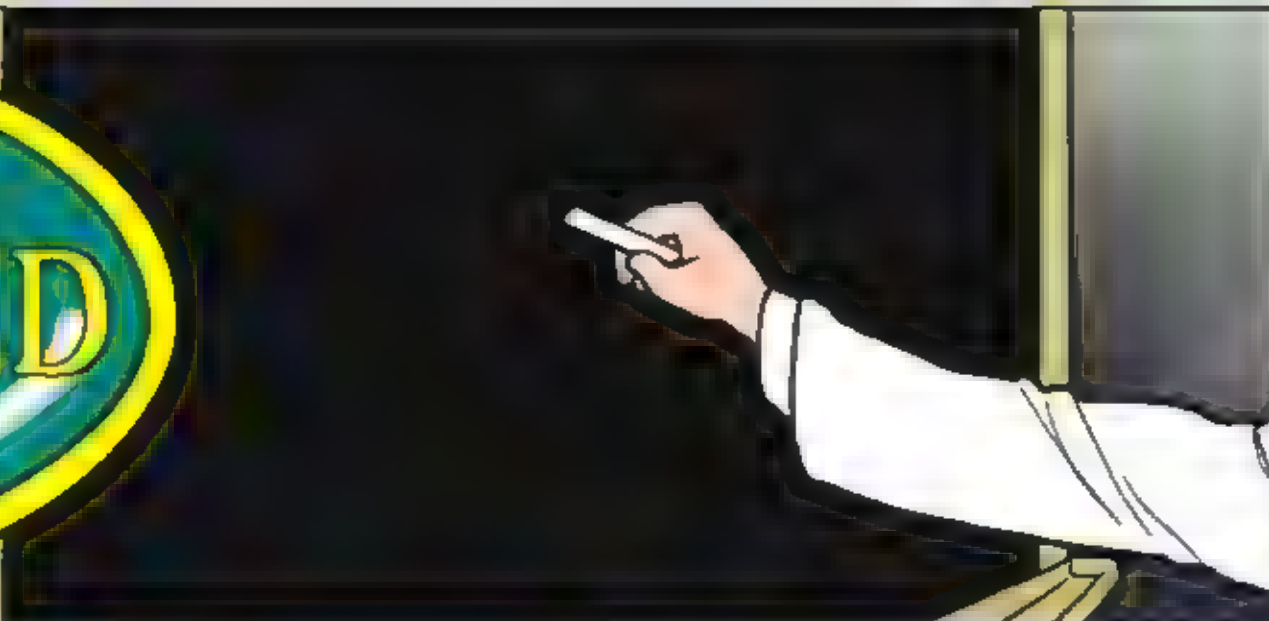




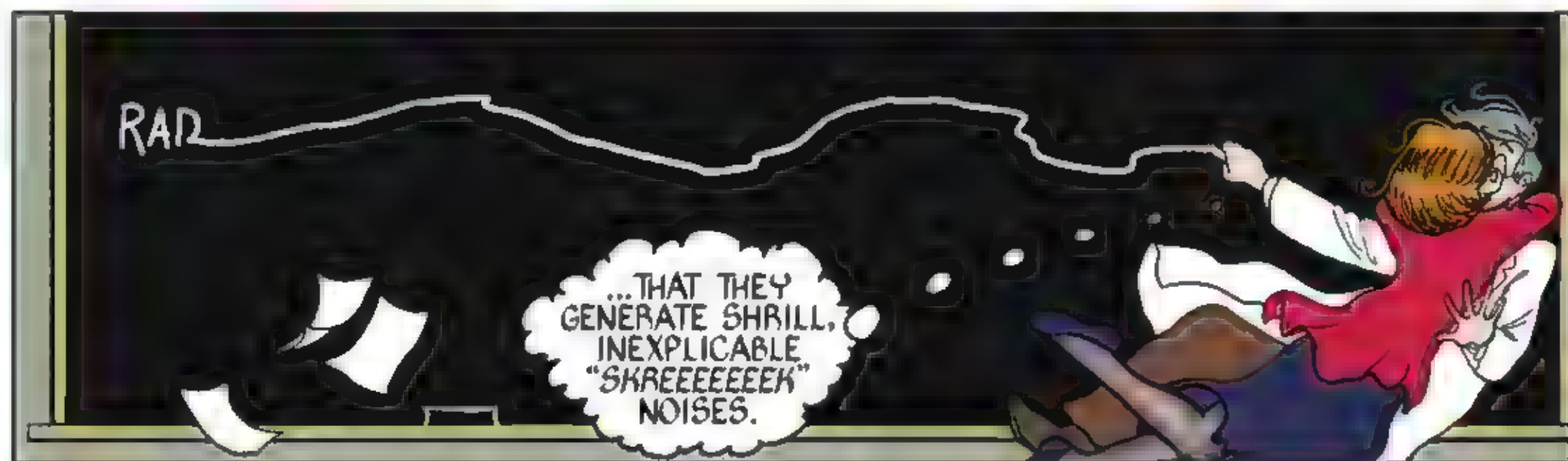
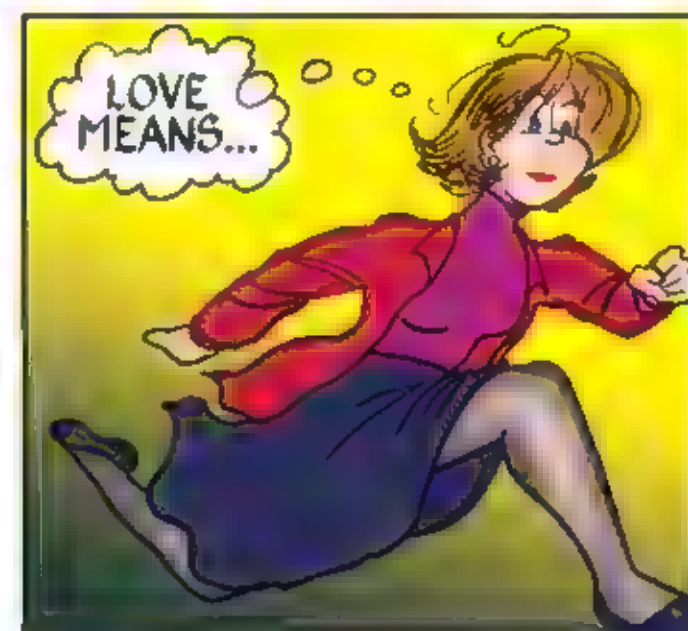


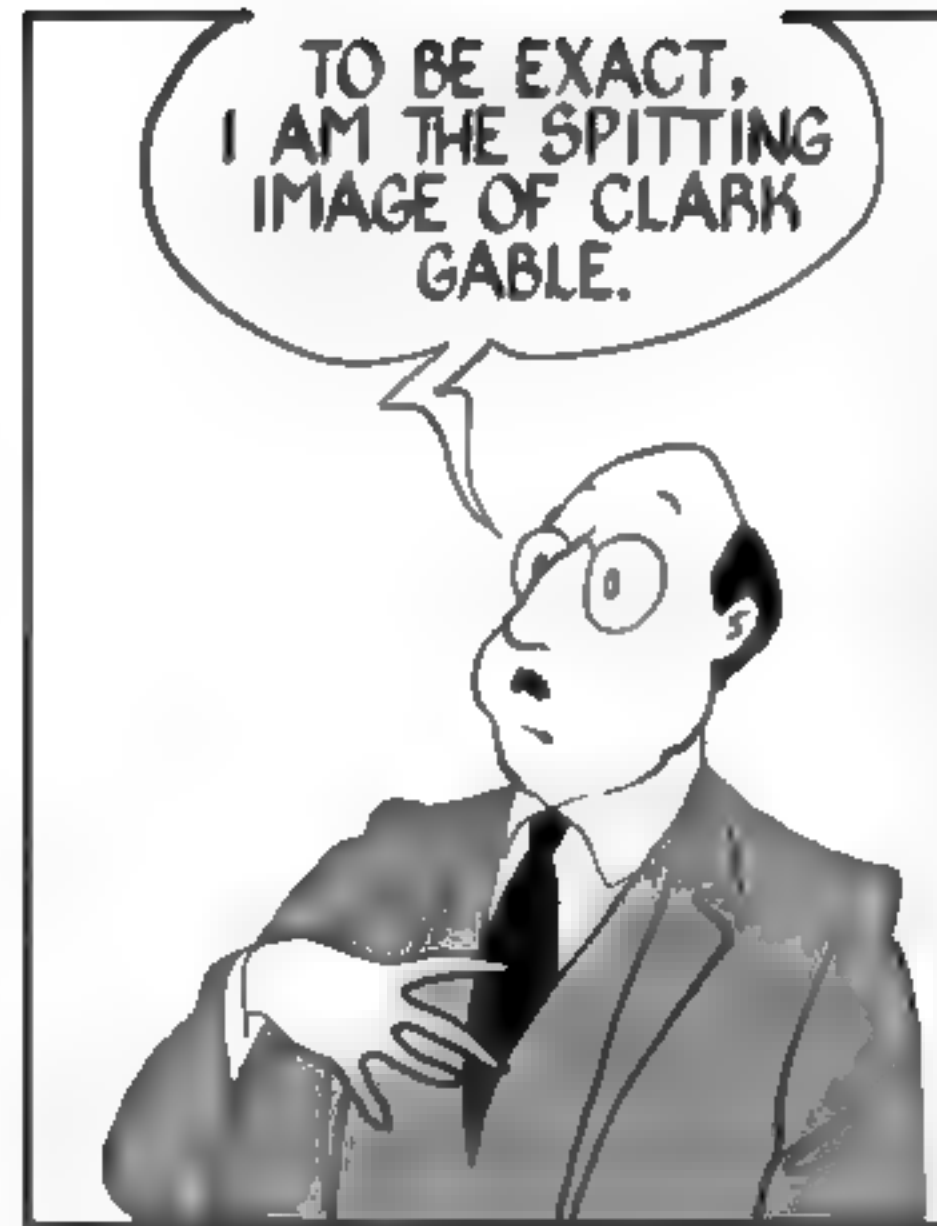






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IT IS MY WISH THAT WE  
CONFER...YOU IN YOUR  
CAPACITY AS A PH.D. IN  
BIOLOGY, I IN MINE AS  
CREATOR OF HEAVEN, EARTH  
AND ALL THINGS THAT  
CREEPETH AND  
CRAWLETH.

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WHAT I WANT TO DO IS CONFER  
WITH YOU OVER A DESIGN  
I'M DISHING UP...IT'S THE  
PROTOTYPE FOR A NEW  
RACE OF BEINGS.  
THEY WILL,  
IN A FEW  
GENERATIONS,  
HOLD SWAY  
OVER  
YOUR  
ENTIRE  
PLANET.

THAT'S...A  
COCKROACH.

NOT JUST  
ANY  
COCKROACH.

Ooo...  
...RACING  
STRIPES.

Booker



THE COCKROACH SAPIENS PROJECT IS ALREADY UNDER WAY, BUT I FEEL SOME FINAL MODIFICATIONS ARE IN ORDER.

YOU WANT TO TWEAK THE DESIGN?



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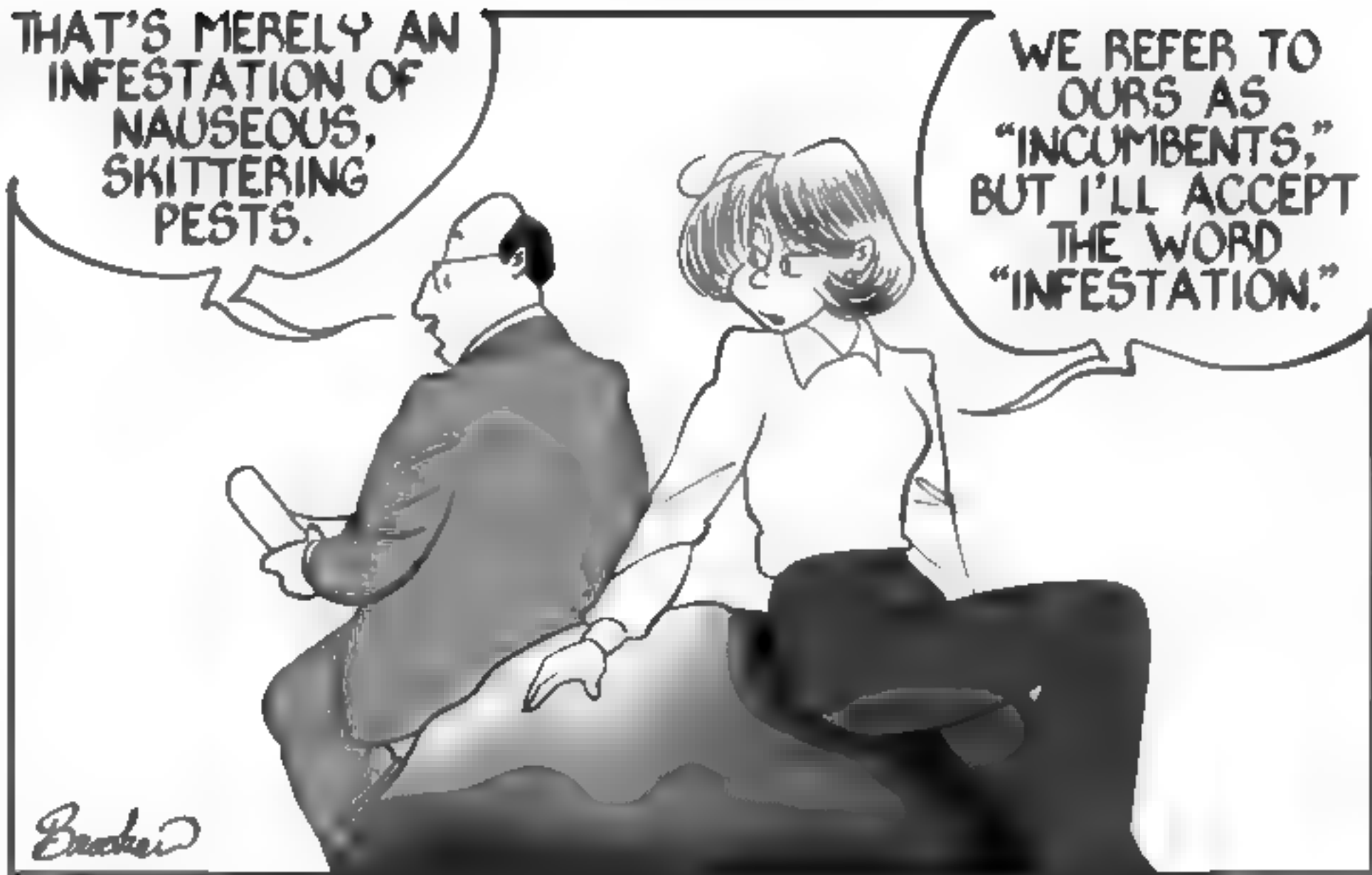
I'LL GIVE YOU CREDIT AS A CONSULTANT, AND YOU'LL BE ABLE TO WATCH WITH PRIDE AS A NEW RACE OF COCKROACHES SPREADS OVER THE WORLD.

I'VE GOT A FLASH FOR YOU. ...THEY'RE ALREADY IN PLACE.



THAT'S MERELY AN INFESTATION OF NAUSEOUS, SKITTERING PESTS.

Brooke



WE REFER TO OURS AS "INCUMBENTS," BUT I'LL ACCEPT THE WORD "INFESTATION."



I'VE INCORPORATED CERTAIN HUMAN TRAITS...LARGER BACK LEGS FOR BIPEDAL STABILITY, AND A GREATER FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT IN THE FORELEGS FOR GESTURING DURING FILIBUSTERS.

AND WHAT ARE THOSE?



TEETH...IT HAS BEEN OBSERVED THAT NOTHING CAN STOP THE PERSON WHO KNOWS HOW TO WREATH HIS FACE IN THE CYNICAL EXPEDIENT OF A REASSURING SMILE.

REALLY?



FEELING REASSURED?

ACTUALLY, MY...MY NECK IS BEGINNING TO SWEAT.

AND I'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN.

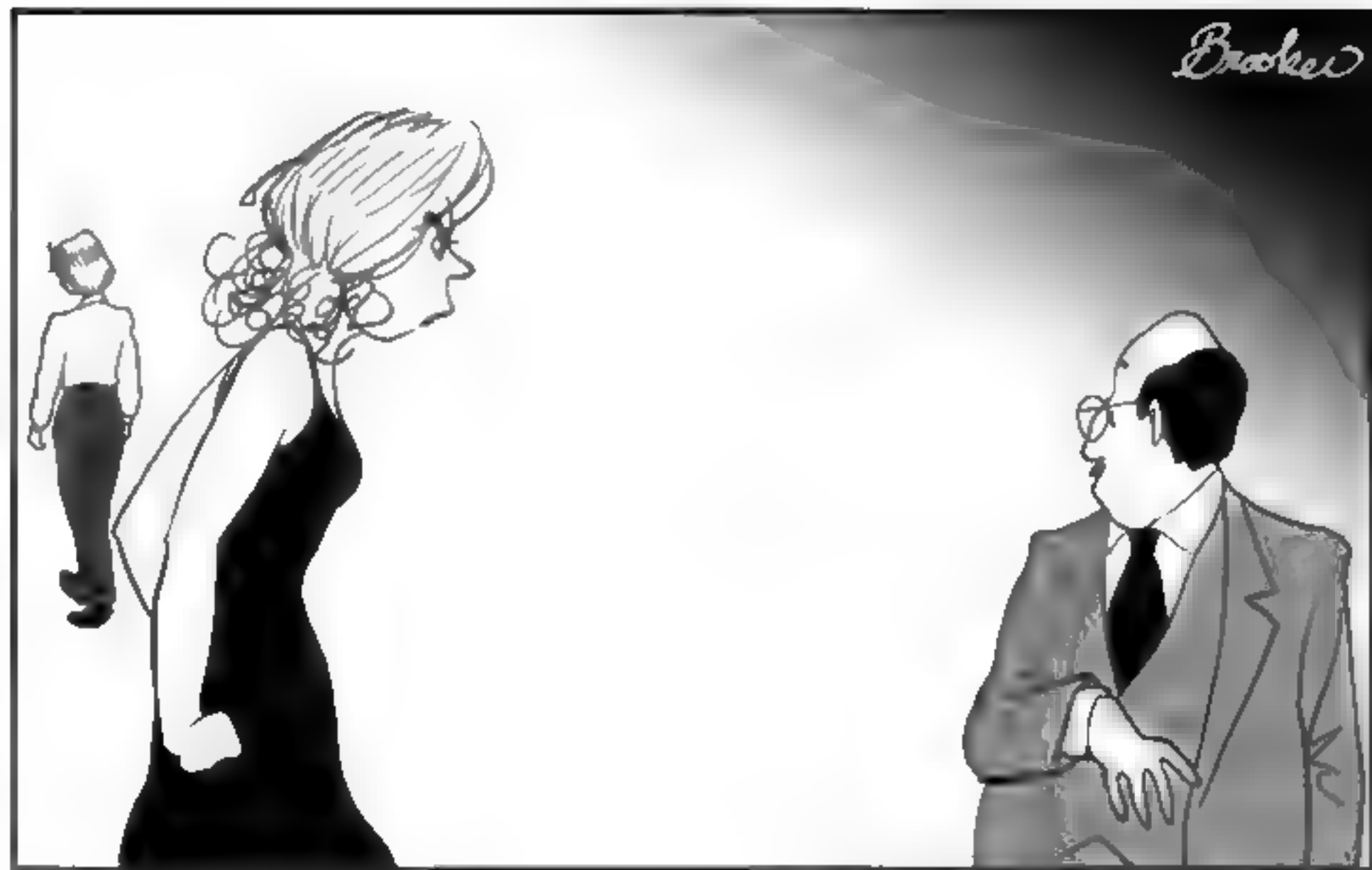
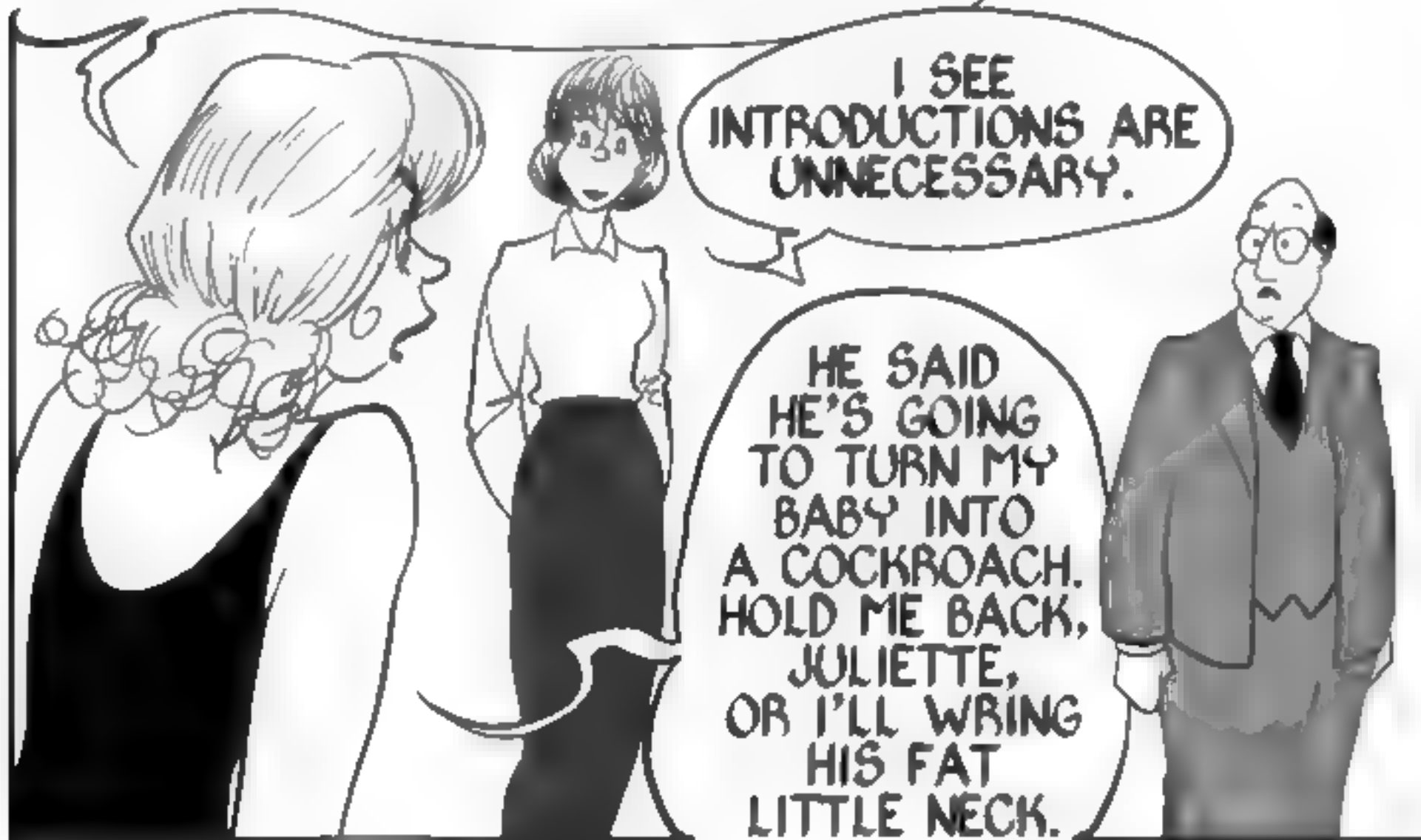


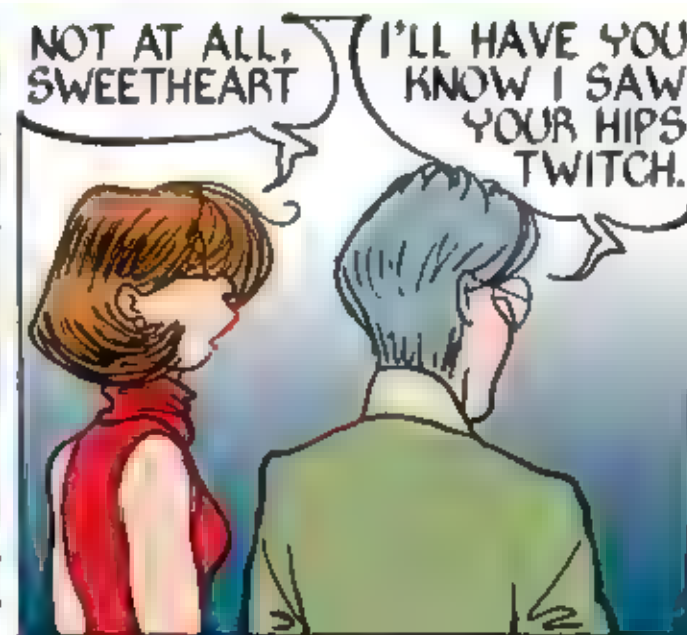
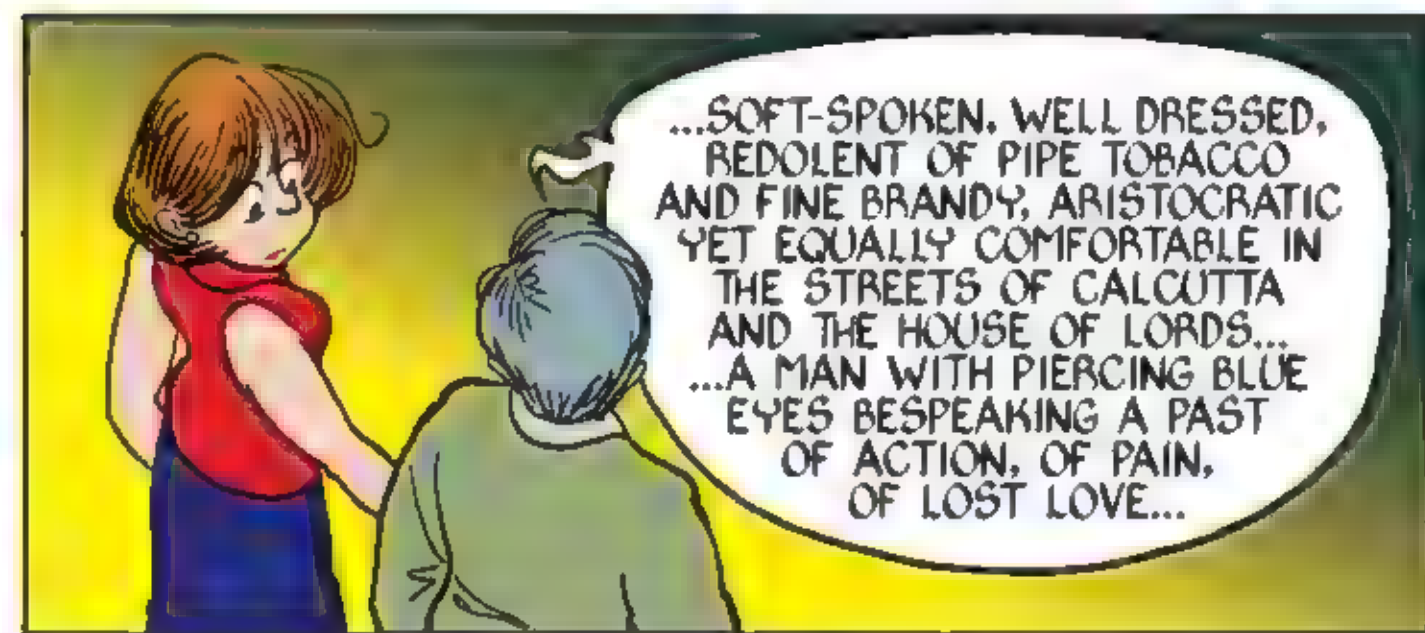
Brooke

THERE HE IS...THE LITTLE EXCRESCENCE!

I SEE  
INTRODUCTIONS ARE  
UNNECESSARY.

HE SAID  
HE'S GOING  
TO TURN MY  
BABY INTO  
A COCKROACH.  
HOLD ME BACK,  
JULIETTE,  
OR I'LL WRING  
HIS FAT  
LITTLE NECK.









Brooke

YOUR LITTLE FRIEND...  
...I'M SORRY, I FORGET  
HIS NAME... YOU KNOW,  
THE COSMIC BIG  
CHEESE?

MONTY?

YES,  
MONTY.  
HE IS ALONE  
WITH DIANE.

THIS  
COULD  
MEAN THE  
END OF THE  
UNIVERSE  
AS WE  
KNOW IT.



"I AIN'T GOT NONE,  
NOHOW!"

GHAWWW!  
TRIPLE NEGATIVES  
IN DIALECT!  
STOP!



YOU ARE A NOISOME  
LITTLE MAN WHO HAS  
INTRUDED INTO MY  
HAPPINESS JUST TO  
DEMONSTRATE BEYOND  
CAVIL THAT YOU  
ARE INSANE.



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HOWEVER, LET US  
HYPOTHESIZE THAT YOU  
ACTUALLY ARE A  
SUPREME  
BEING.

THE  
SUPREME  
BEING.



Brooke

THEN I AM LEFT, PERFORCE,  
WITH BUT ONE CONCLUSION:  
YOU ARE, NEVERTHELESS,  
INSANE.

YOU  
CAN'T  
CALL  
ME  
THAT.

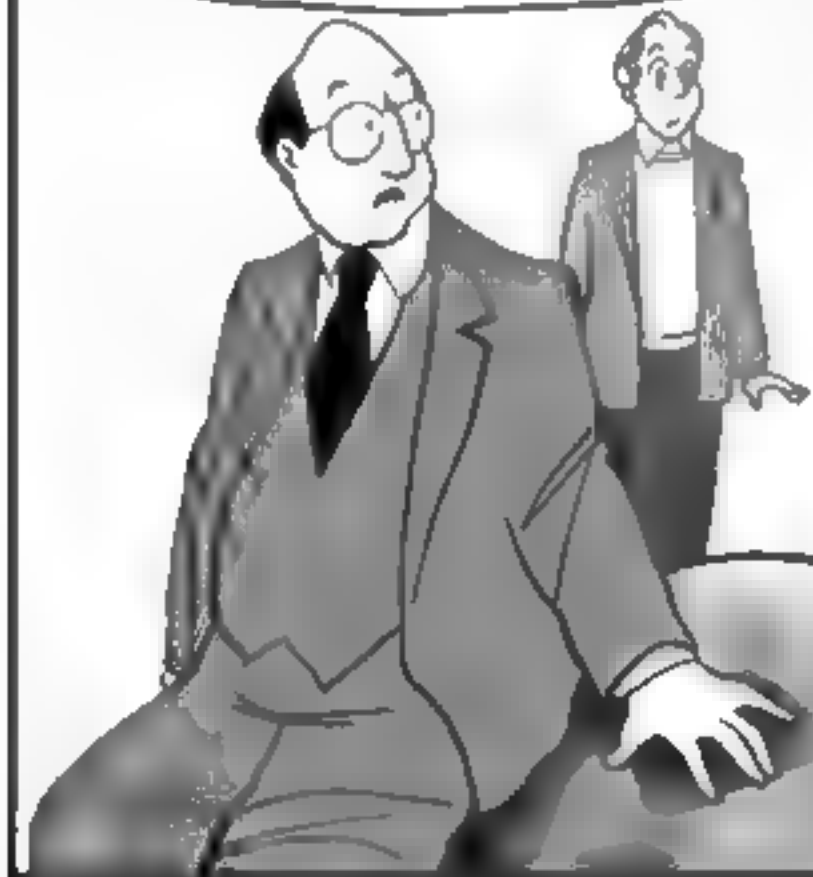


EXPLAIN THEN JUST SOME  
OF YOUR HANDIWORK...  
...STROKES, DEMENTIA,  
HOLY WARS,  
ARMPITS, THE  
STATE OF  
NEBRASKA...

ON THE  
OTHER HAND,  
AN INSANITY  
DEFENSE HAS  
ITS VIRTUES.



SO WHAT AM I LEFT WITH?...  
...THE IDEA THAT I'M SITTING  
ON A ROCK WITH A DELUDED  
LITTLE TROLL OF A MAN...



...OR ABIDING WITH THE  
MOST POWERFUL  
FORCE IN THE  
UNIVERSE,  
WORSHIPPED  
IN ONE FORM  
OR ANOTHER  
THROUGHOUT  
THE WORLD...  
...A BEING WHO  
HAS PROMISED  
TO CONVERT  
MY UNBORN  
CHILD INTO A  
COCK-  
ROACH.



YOU'RE  
PREGNANT!?



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HE  
WHAT?!!

Brooke

THE LAST TIME I TALKED YOU  
OUT OF ANNIHILATING HUMANKIND,  
I WAS DOING THE WORLD A  
SERVICE...I WAS GIVING  
PEOPLE BACK  
THEIR...

THEIR WHAT?  
...THEIR  
OPPORTUNITY  
TO MASSACRE  
EACH OTHER  
IN MY NAME,  
BUT WITHOUT MY  
INTERFERENCE?

WHY ARE YOU  
TALKING TO HIM AS  
IF HE IS...WHAT HE  
SAYS  
HE IS?

WHEN YOU SAY THINGS  
THAT WAY, YOU MAKE  
PEOPLE LOOK SO AWFUL.

I MADE PEOPLE  
LOOK LIKE ME.  
PAISLEYS AND  
INTERPRETIVE  
DANCE  
MAKE  
THEM  
LOOK  
AWFUL.

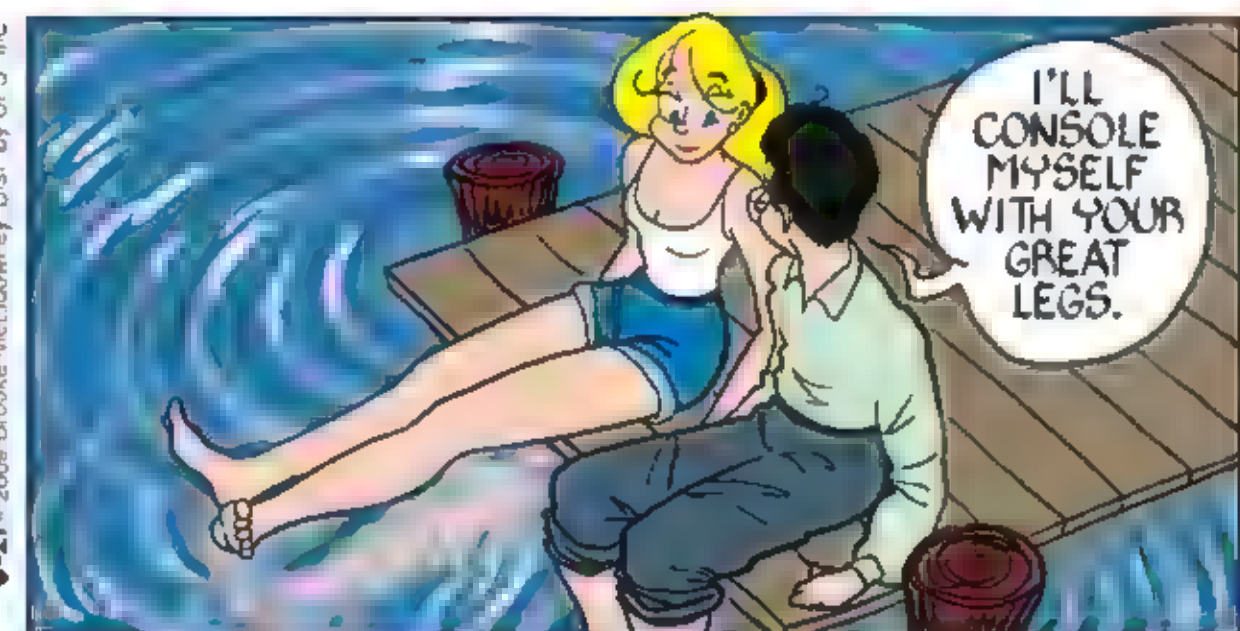
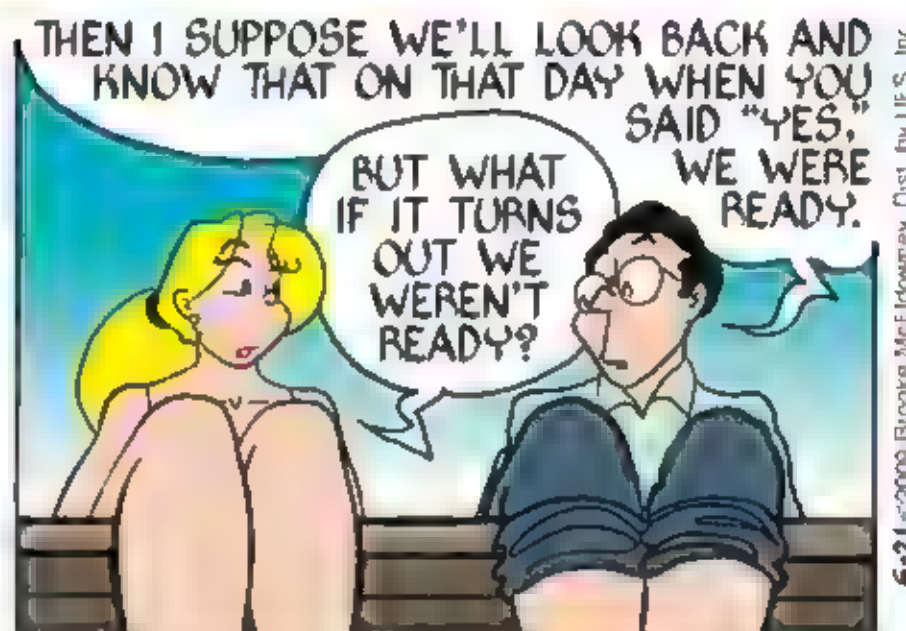
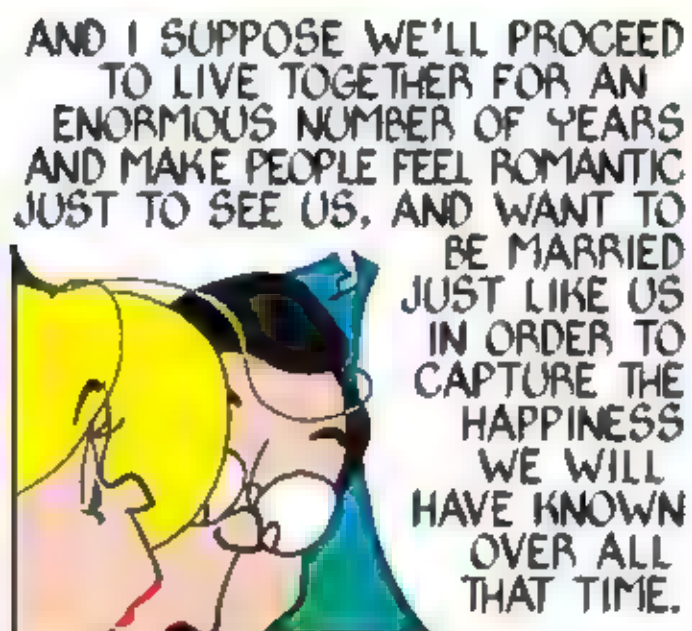
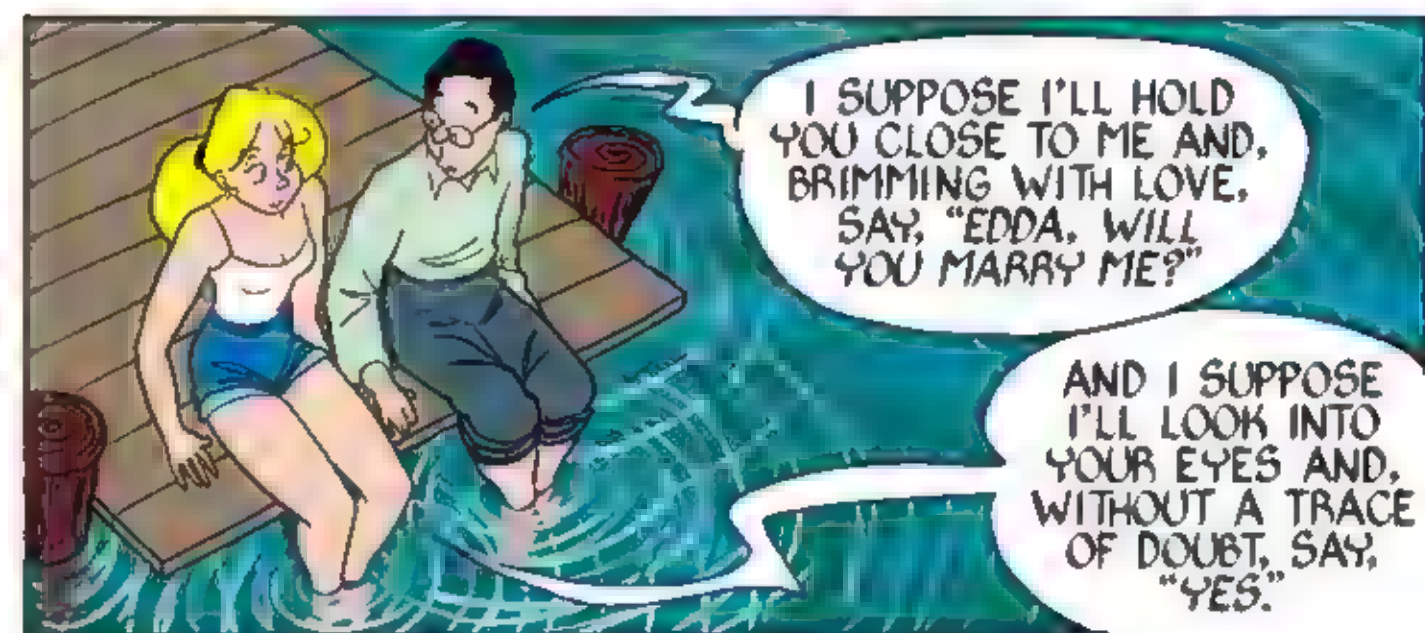
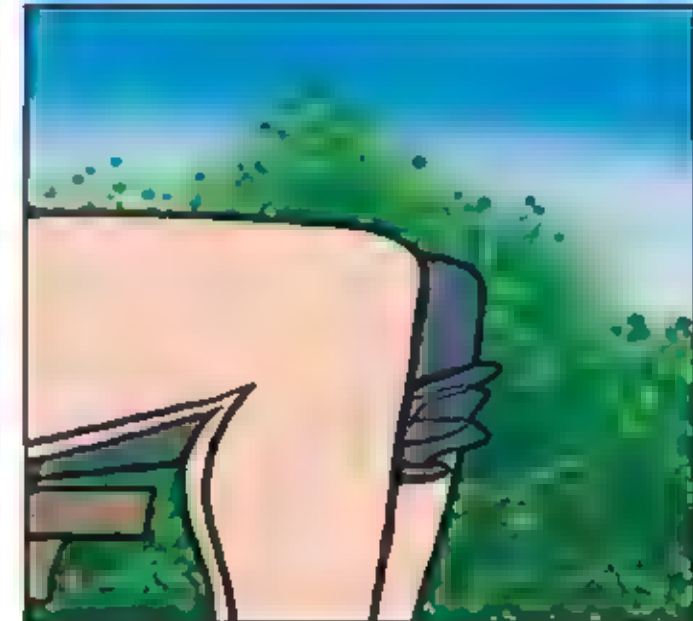
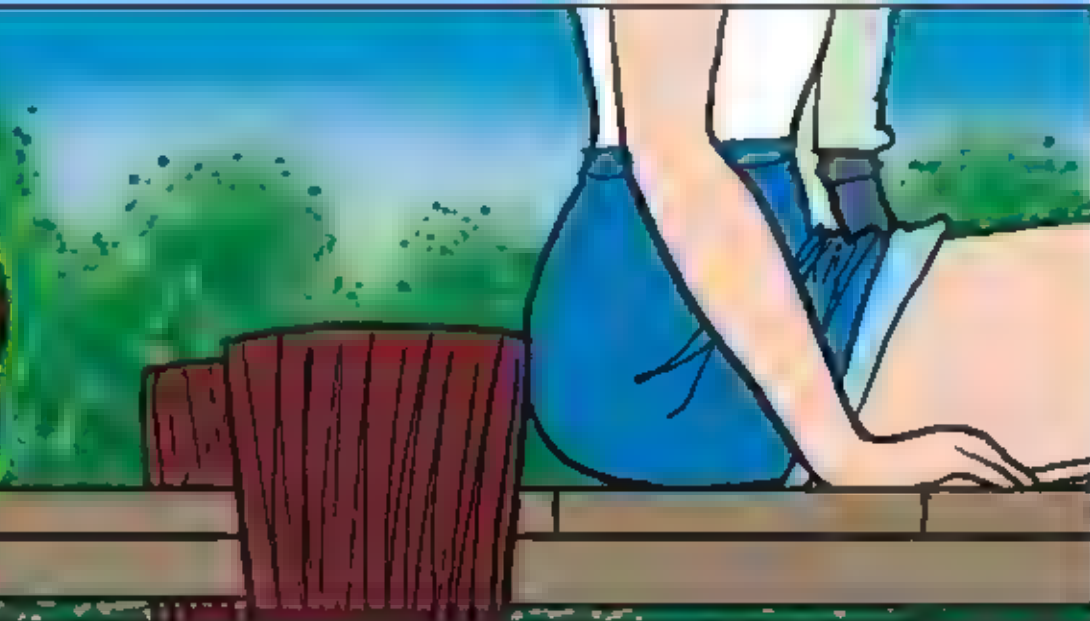
YOU'RE ARGUING WITH  
THAT TOAD AS IF HE  
ACTUALLY CREATED  
HEAVEN AND EARTH.

WELL, WHAT WOULD YOU DO  
IF YOU WERE CONFRONTED  
WITH THE POSSIBILITY THAT  
HE MIGHT BE ENDING  
EVERYTHING AS  
WE HAVE  
KNOWN  
IT?

Brooke









EXCUSE ME, WILL THIS  
TAKE MUCH LONGER?...  
...I HAVE A SPECIES  
TO ANNIHILATE,  
AND...



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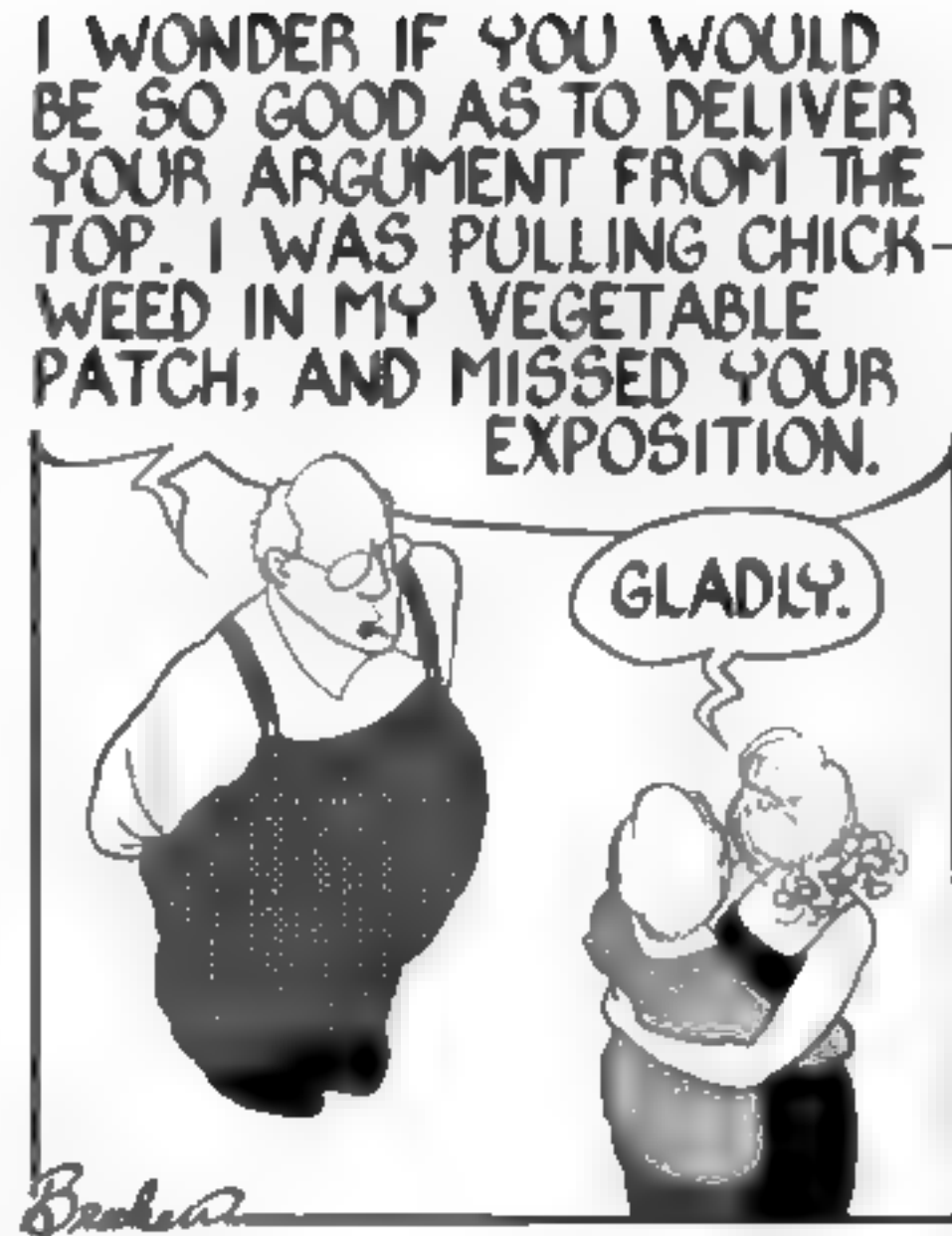
HE ASKED ME WHAT  
I WOULD DO IF I LEARNED  
THAT EVERYTHING I HAVE  
EVER KNOWN WERE ENDING.  
...I'M  
DELIVERING  
MY  
DISSERTATION.



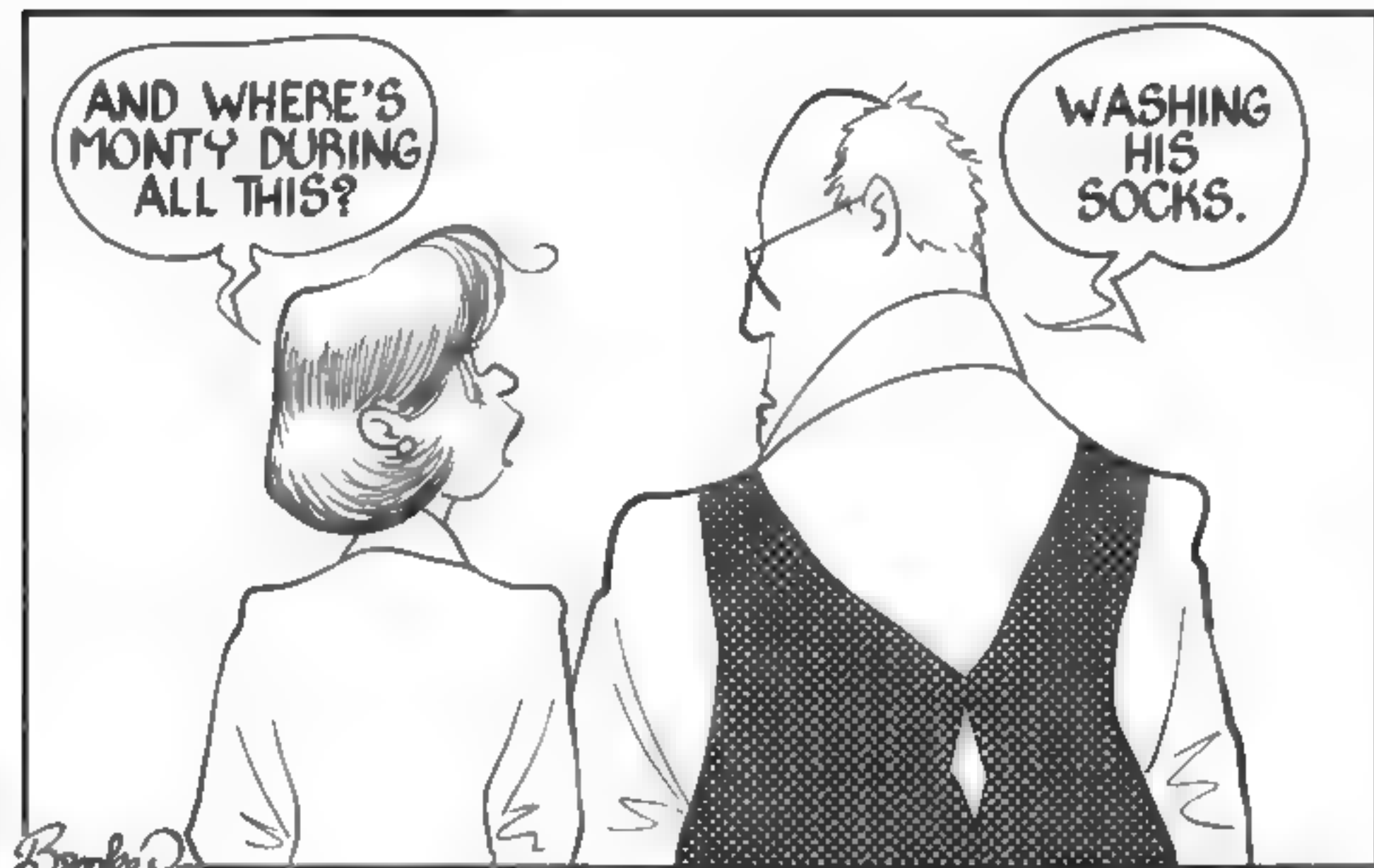
ACADEMICS.



Brooke







Brooke

WHAT WE ARE WITNESSING HERE IS THE  
KISS OF UNALLOYED LOVE...OF CHASTITY  
AND PURITY, DEVOTION AND SELFLESSNESS.  
IT TRANSCENDS THE EARTHLY  
AND TEMPORAL. IT IS EMPYREAN,  
CELESTIAL...A KISS FOR THE END  
AND BEGINNING OF EXISTENCE  
ITSELF.

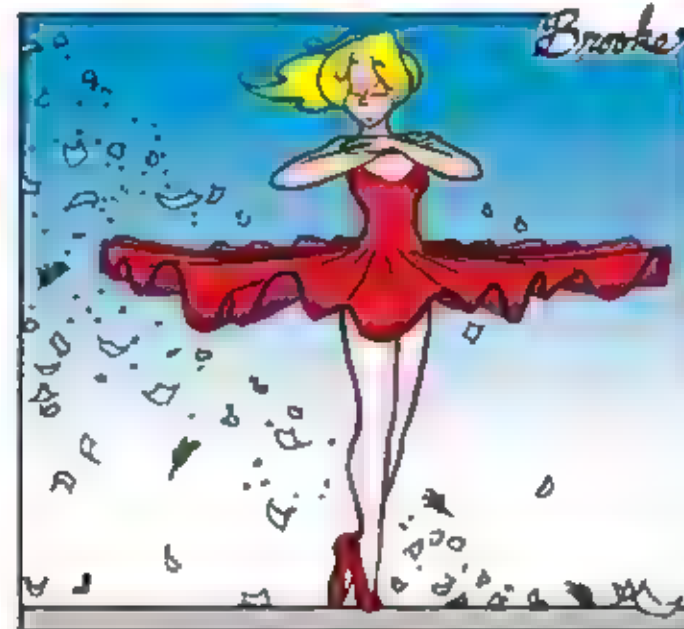
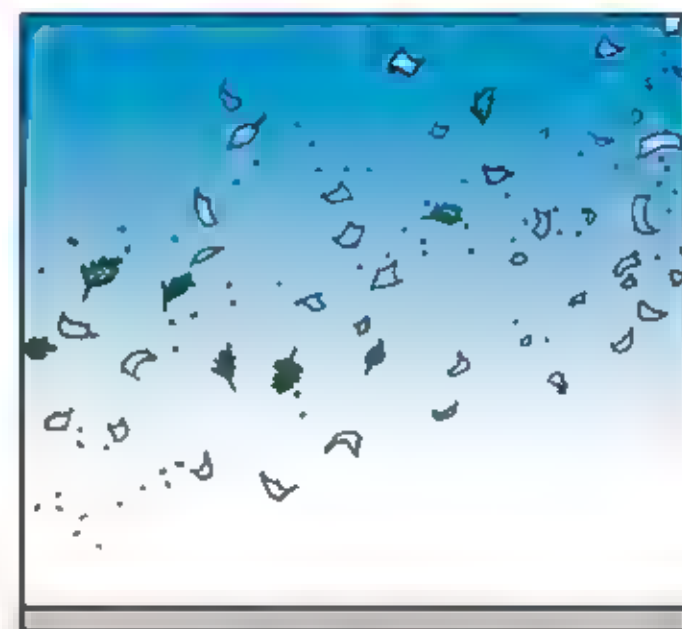
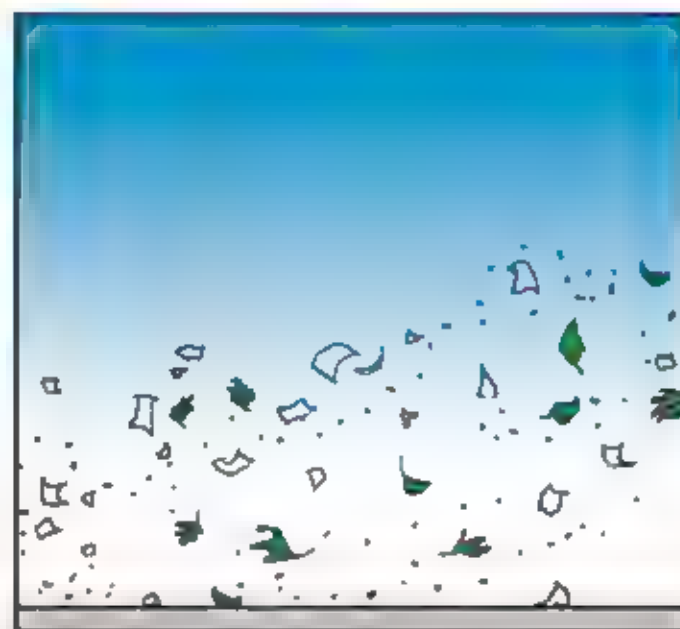
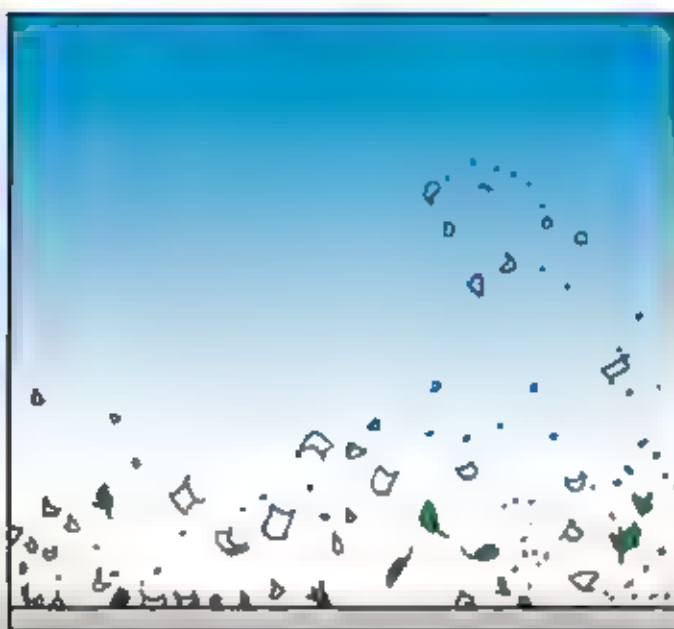
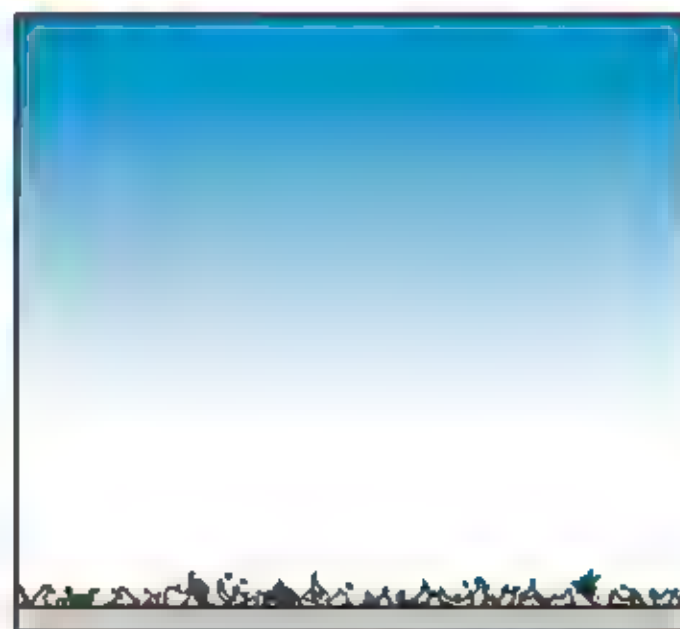
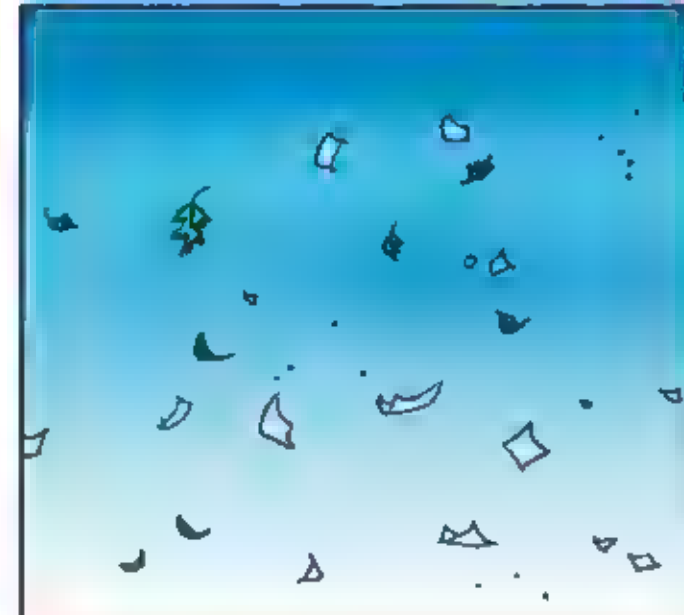
Brooke

SO WHEN IS HE  
GOING TO PUT  
THE MOVES  
ON HER?

DUNNO.  
I KEEP  
WAITING.







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6-28

Brooke



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THAT WAS MOM...SHE SAID  
DIANE AND FRANCIS ARE  
STANDING UP TO  
MONTY.



REALLY?  
WHAT ARE  
THEY  
DOING?

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*Brooke*



I REALLY LOVE IT  
WHEN WE SHOW  
SOLIDARITY.



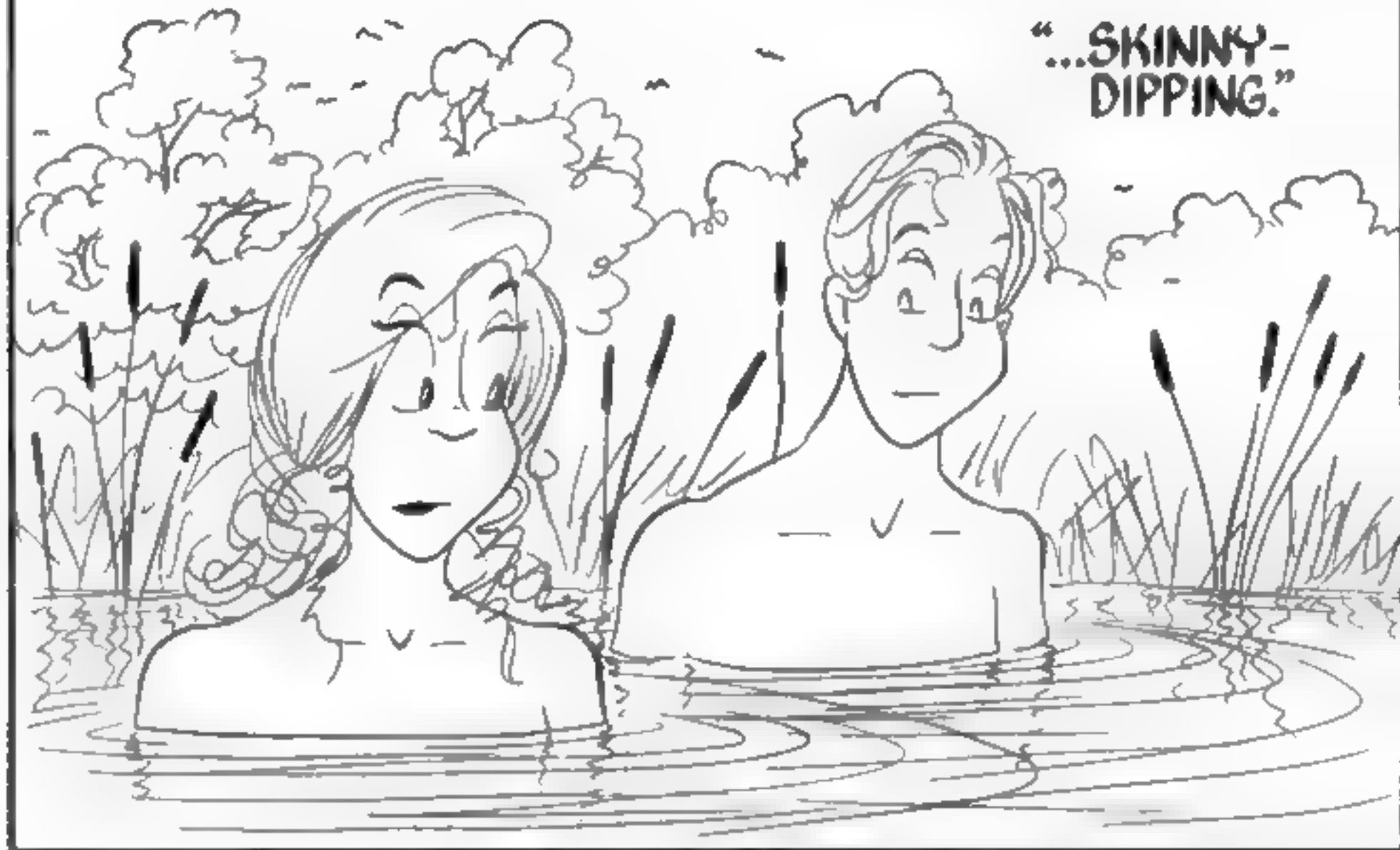
WHAT  
ARE THEY  
DOING  
NOW?



PERFORMING  
ONE OF THE  
MOST  
HALLOWED  
RITUAL  
CEREMONIES  
IN WHICH THE  
COCKROACH  
CANNOT  
PARTICIPATE.  
SOMETHING  
DIANE WANTS  
TO SAVOR  
BEFORE THE  
END OF THE  
WORLD AS  
SHE KNOWS IT.

Brooke

“...SKINNY-  
DIPPING.”



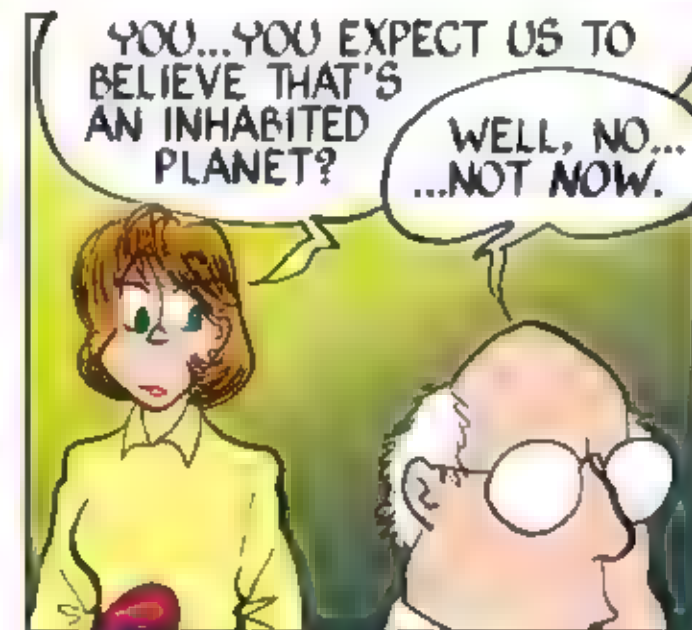
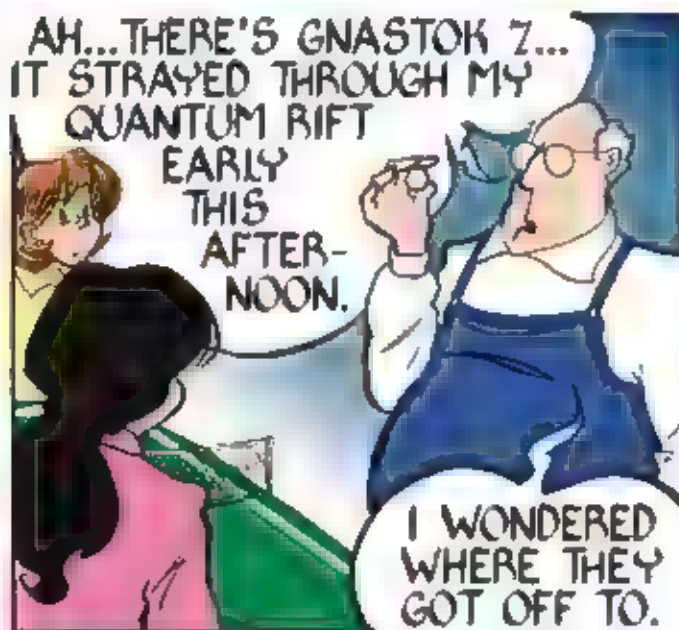
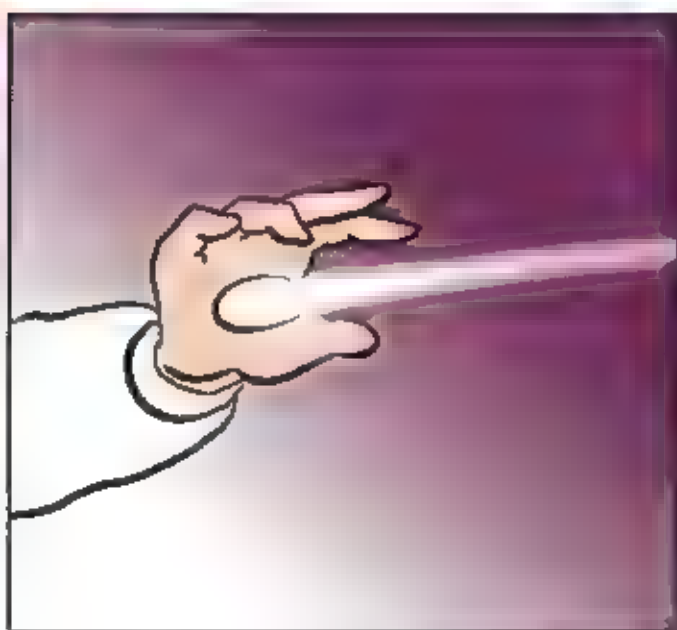
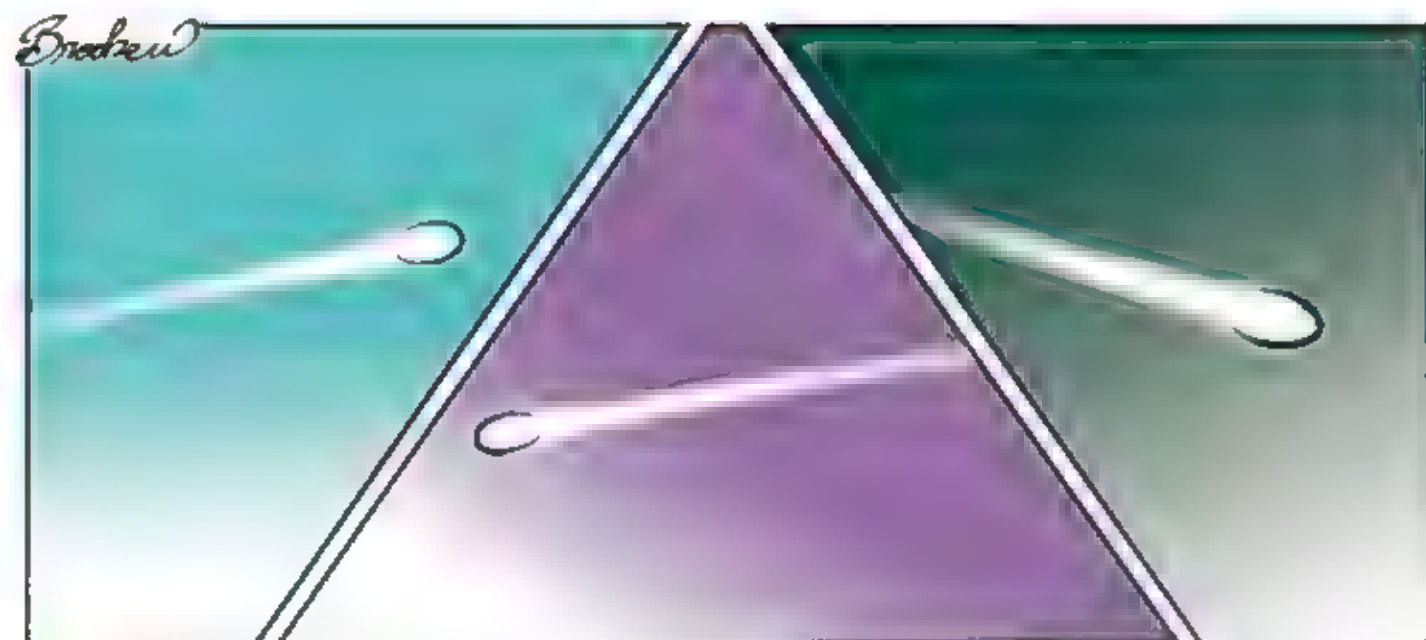
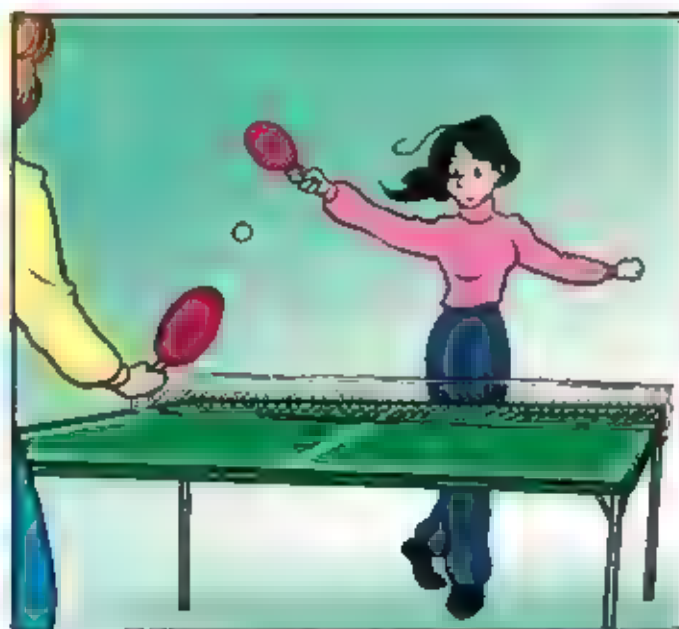
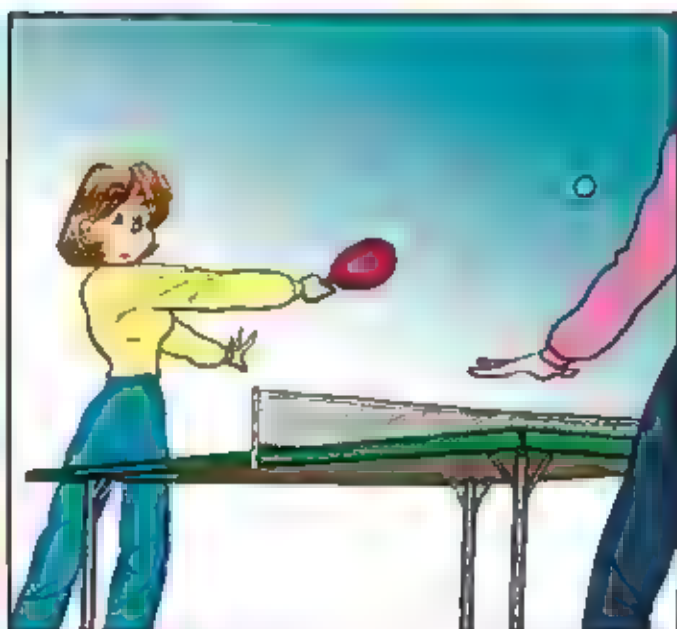


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# 9 CHICKWEED LANE



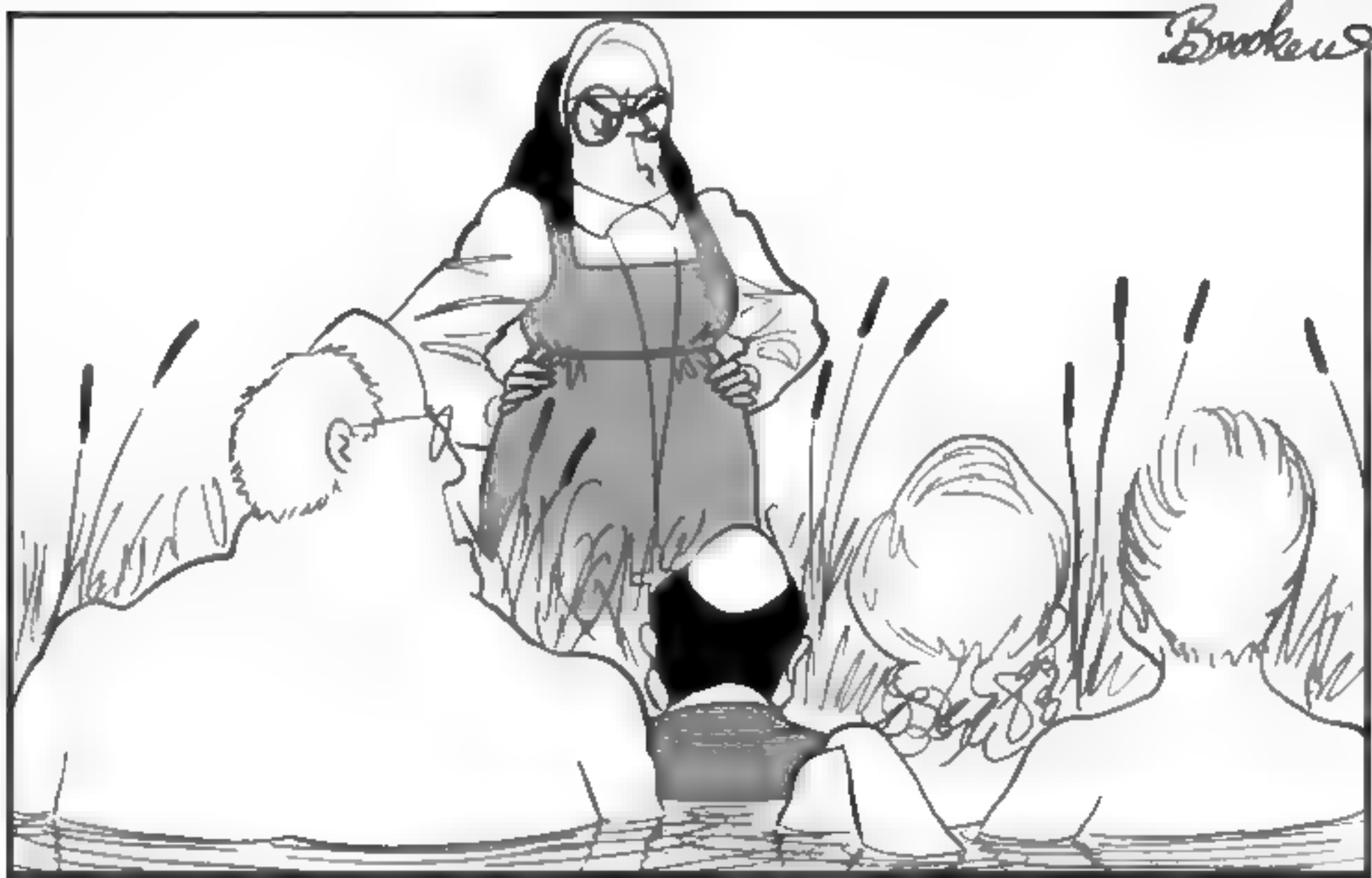




YOU MIGHT AS WELL KNOW,  
SISTER, THAT AS A MEMBER  
OF MY FLOCK, YOU DO NOT  
FRIGHTEN ME.

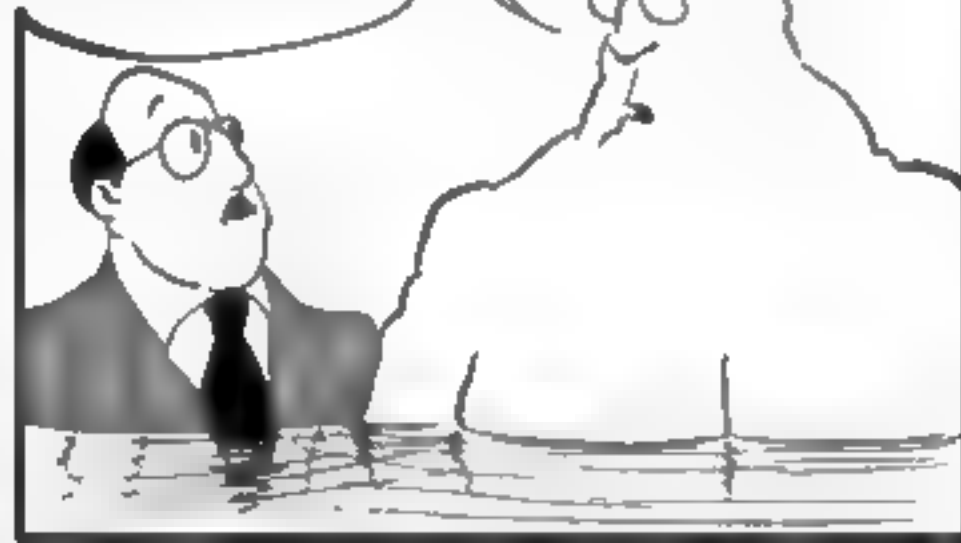


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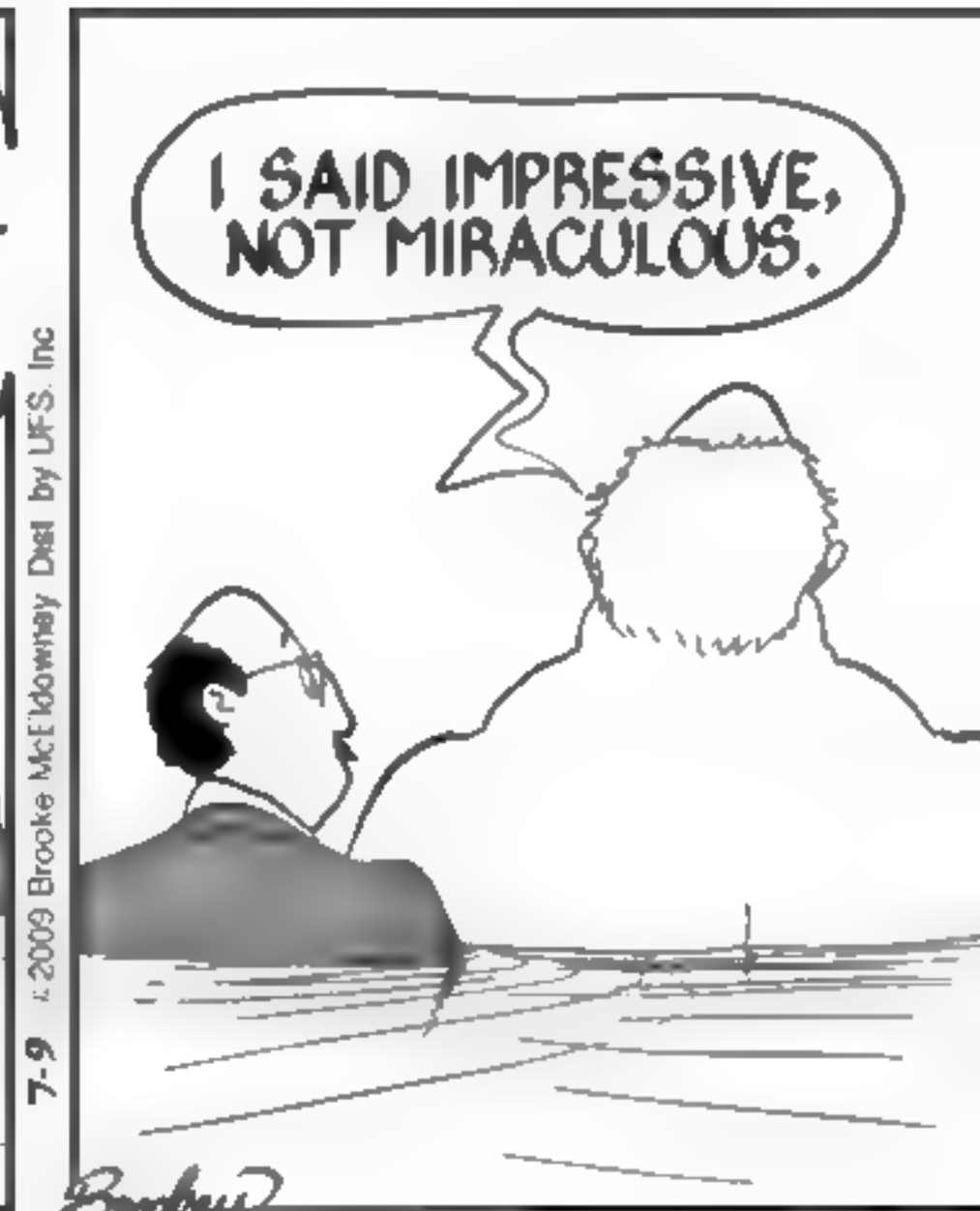
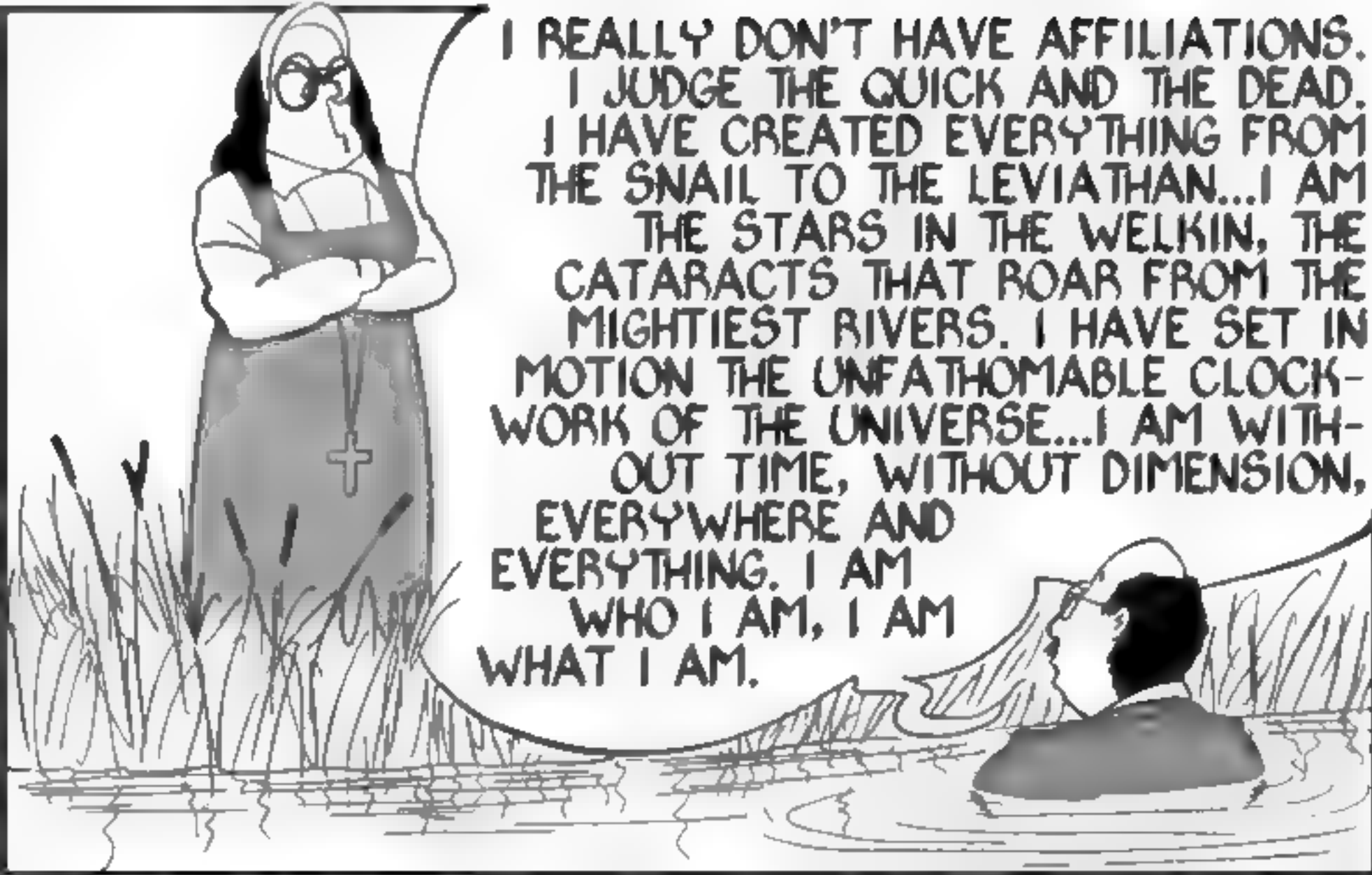


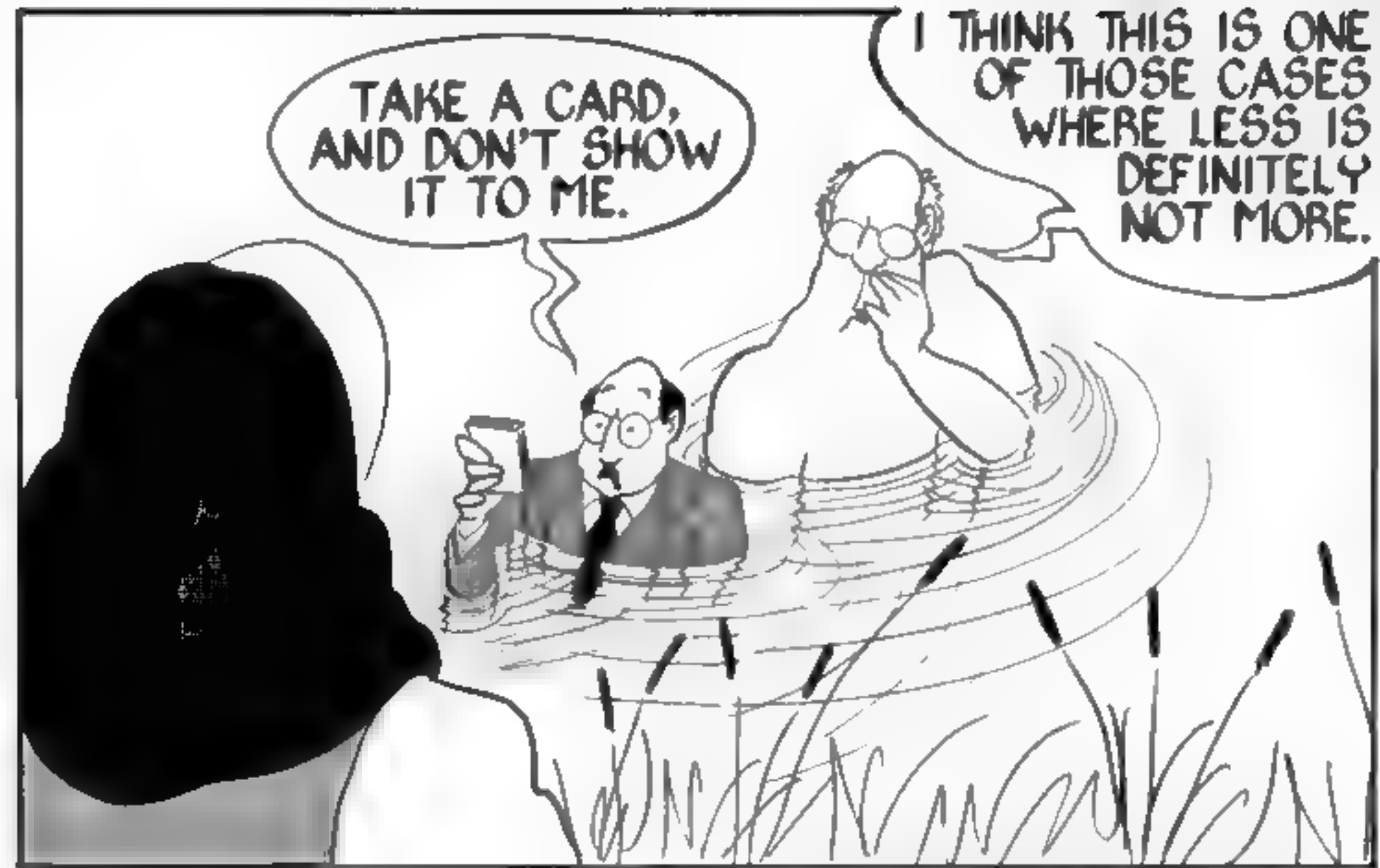
SHE HAS NOT, ACTUALLY. SHE HAS CONSECRATED HER LIFE TO YOU AS AN EMBLEM OF A CORPORATE ENTITY. ...LIKE MOST HUMAN BEINGS, SHE BEHOLDS YOUR WON-  
DROUSNESS THROUGH THE LENS OF THE LOCAL RELIGIOUS FRANCHISE.



YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN JUST THE CREATOR...YOU HAVE BEEN THE CATHOLIC CREATOR, THE LUTHERAN CREATOR, THE JEWISH CREATOR...  
...THE MEGACHURCH ONE-STOP SALVATION DRIVE'N'THE CREATOR...YOU ARE MORE THAN JUST ALMIGHTY...







MOM JUST SAID MONTY IS STILL RESOLVED TO TURN DIANE'S BABY INTO A SAPIENT COCKROACH.



THAT'S ABSURD!

SHE THINKS WE SHOULD COME UP IN A SHOW OF SUPPORT.



...PRETEND WE ENDORSE HIS PREPOSTEROUS HOGWASH?

WHAT?...  
...PANDER TO THAT LUNATIC'S DELU-  
SIONS?

IT WOULD INVOLVE OUR SKINNY-DIPPING SHOULDER DEEP IN A LAKE AND KISSING ARDENTLY.



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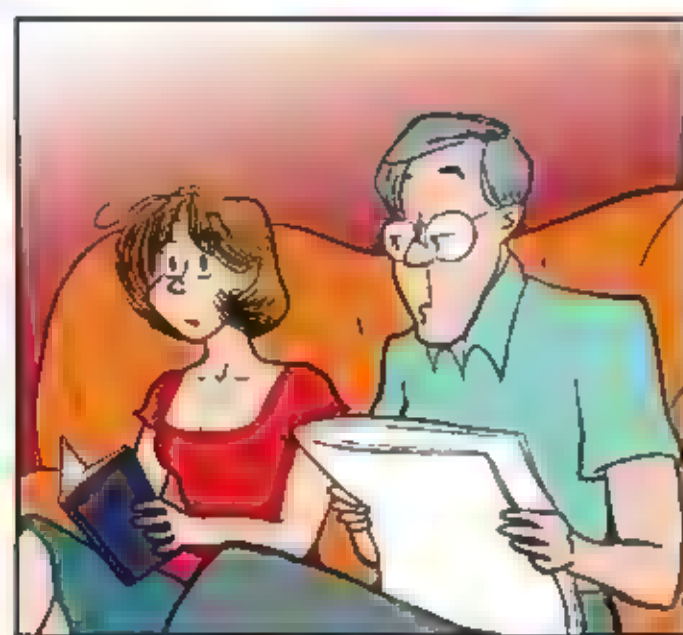
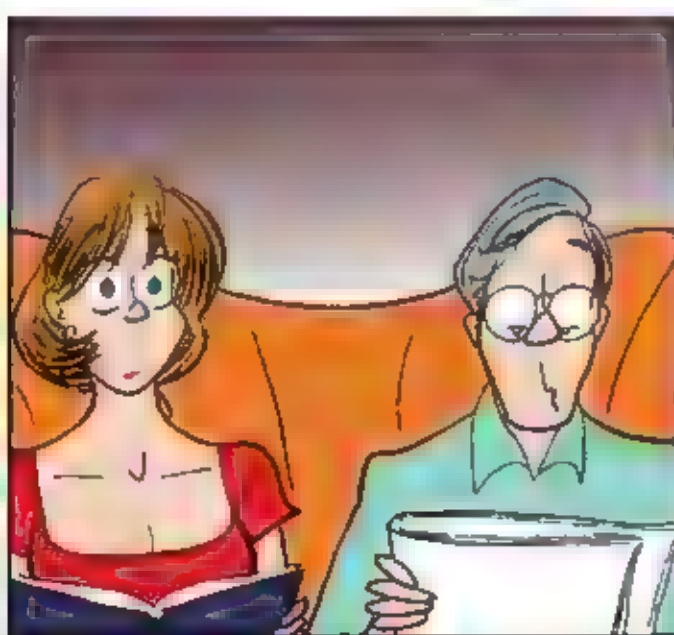
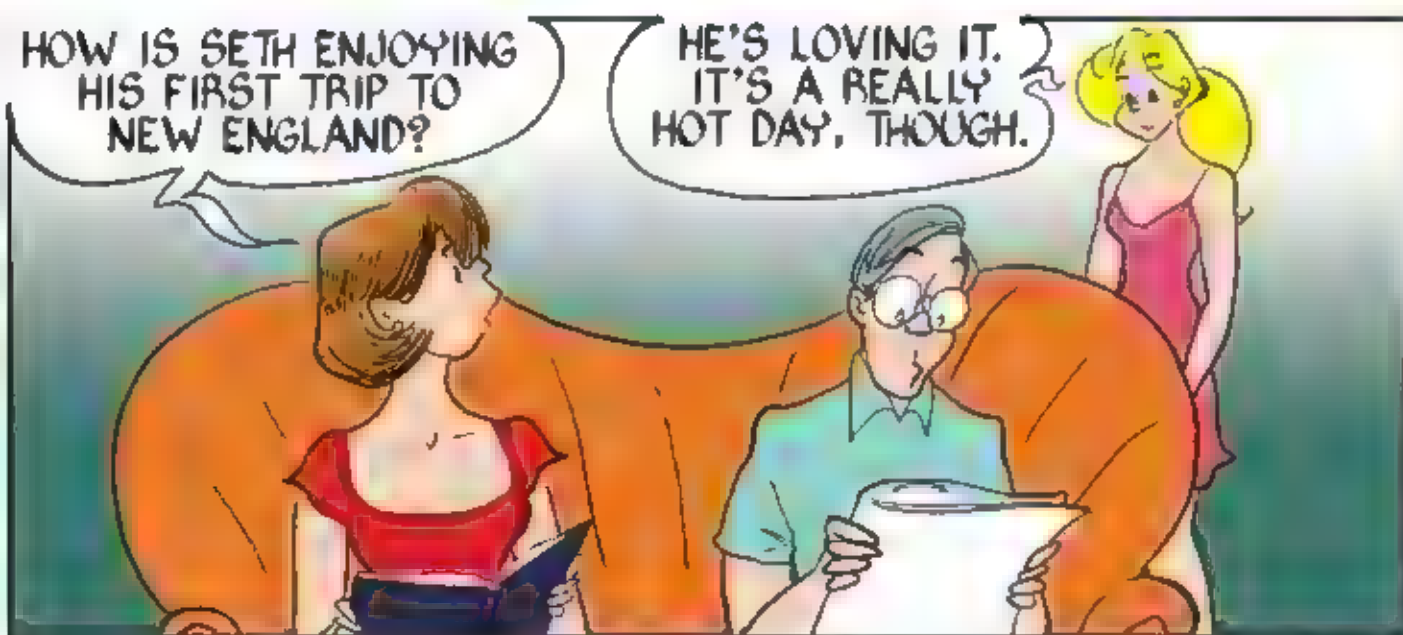
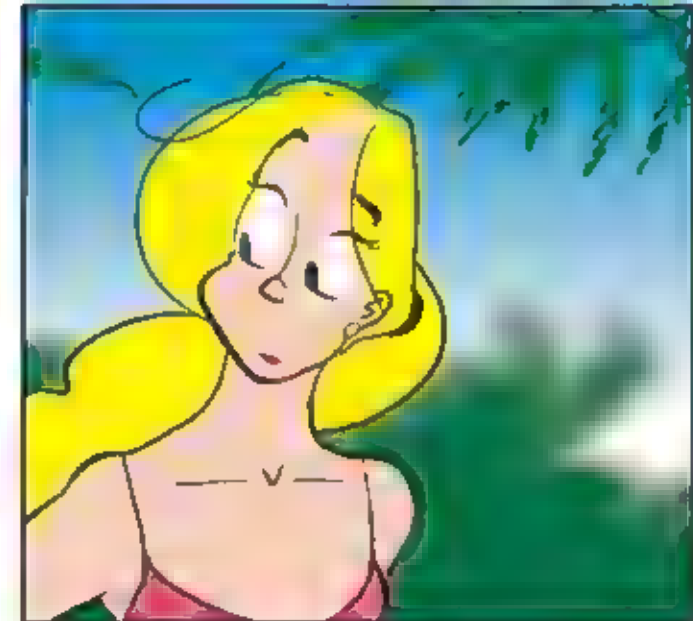
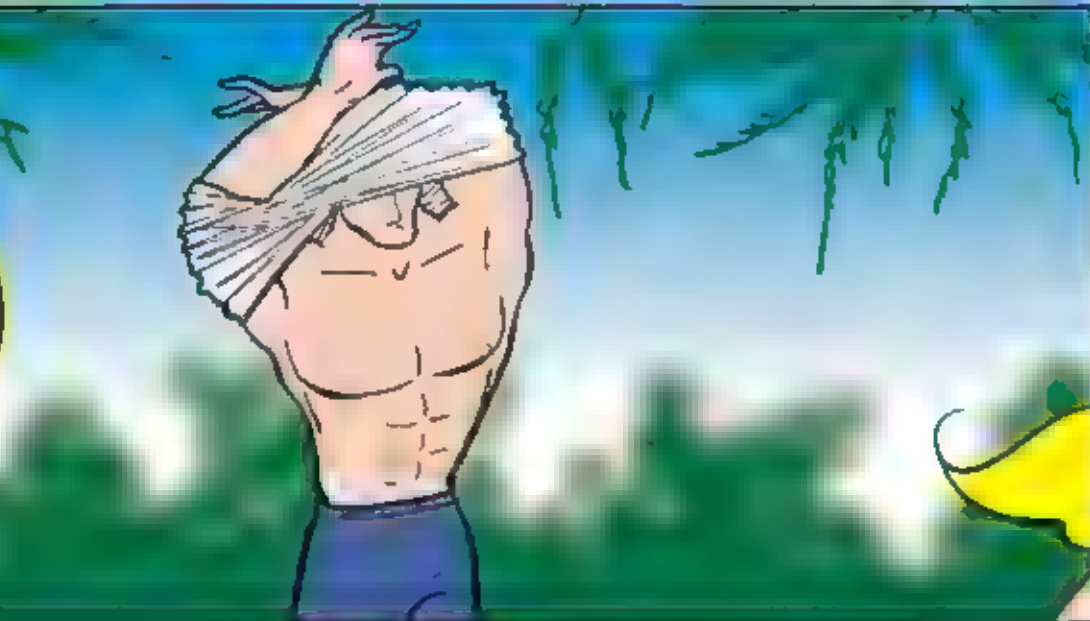
OH, WELL, IF YOU'RE GOING TO BEAT ME TO DEATH WITH LOGIC...  
...I'LL GO RENT A CAR.



Brooke



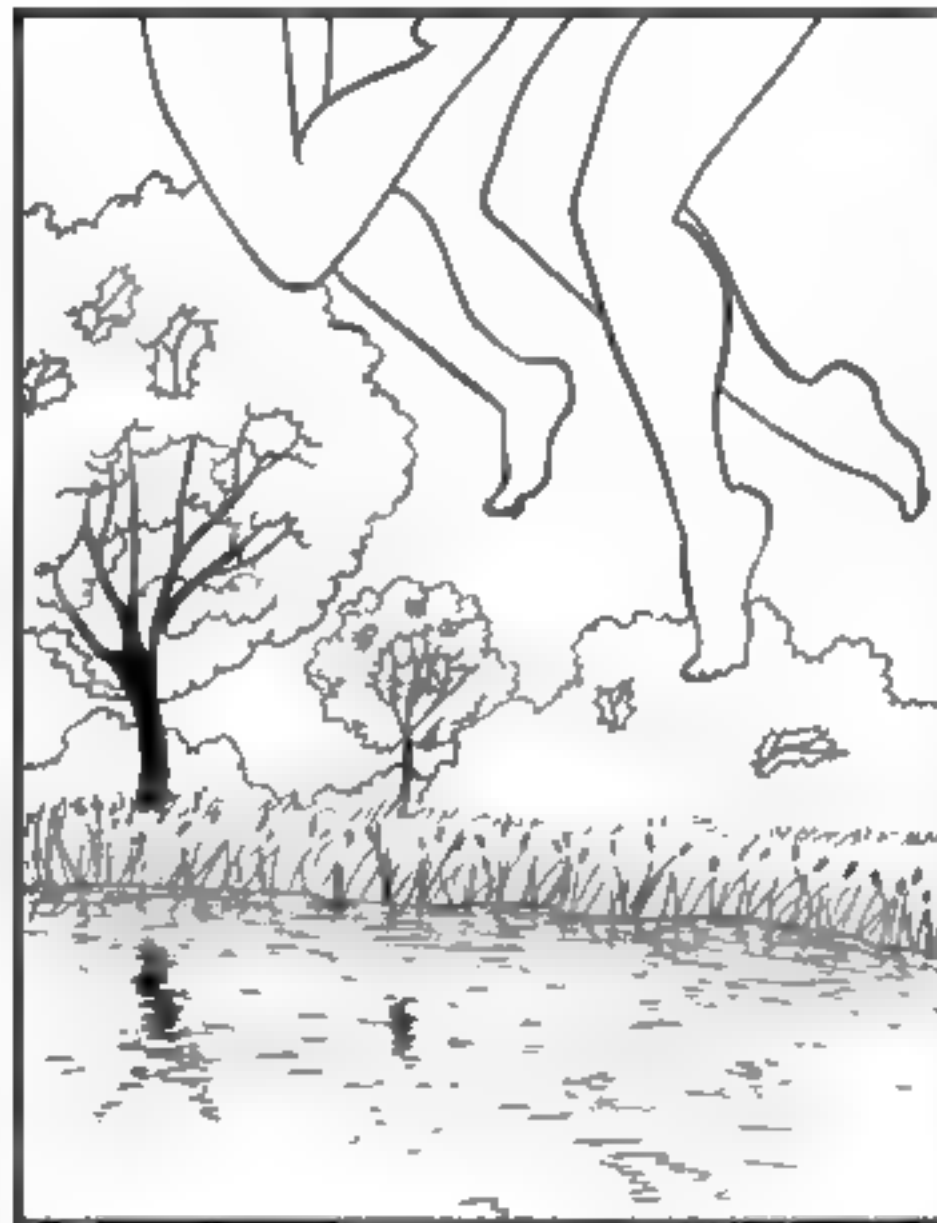
# 9 CHICKWEED LANE



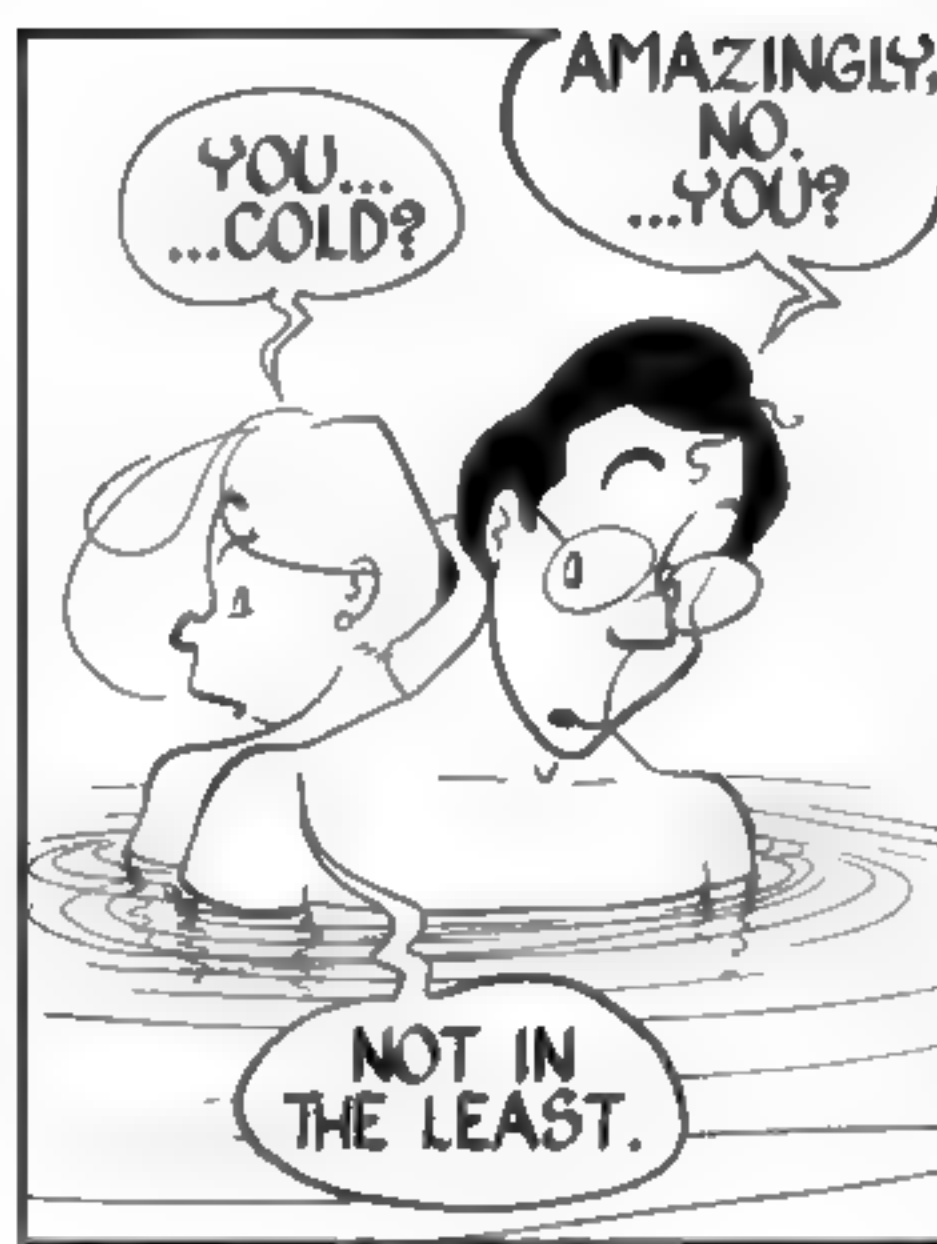
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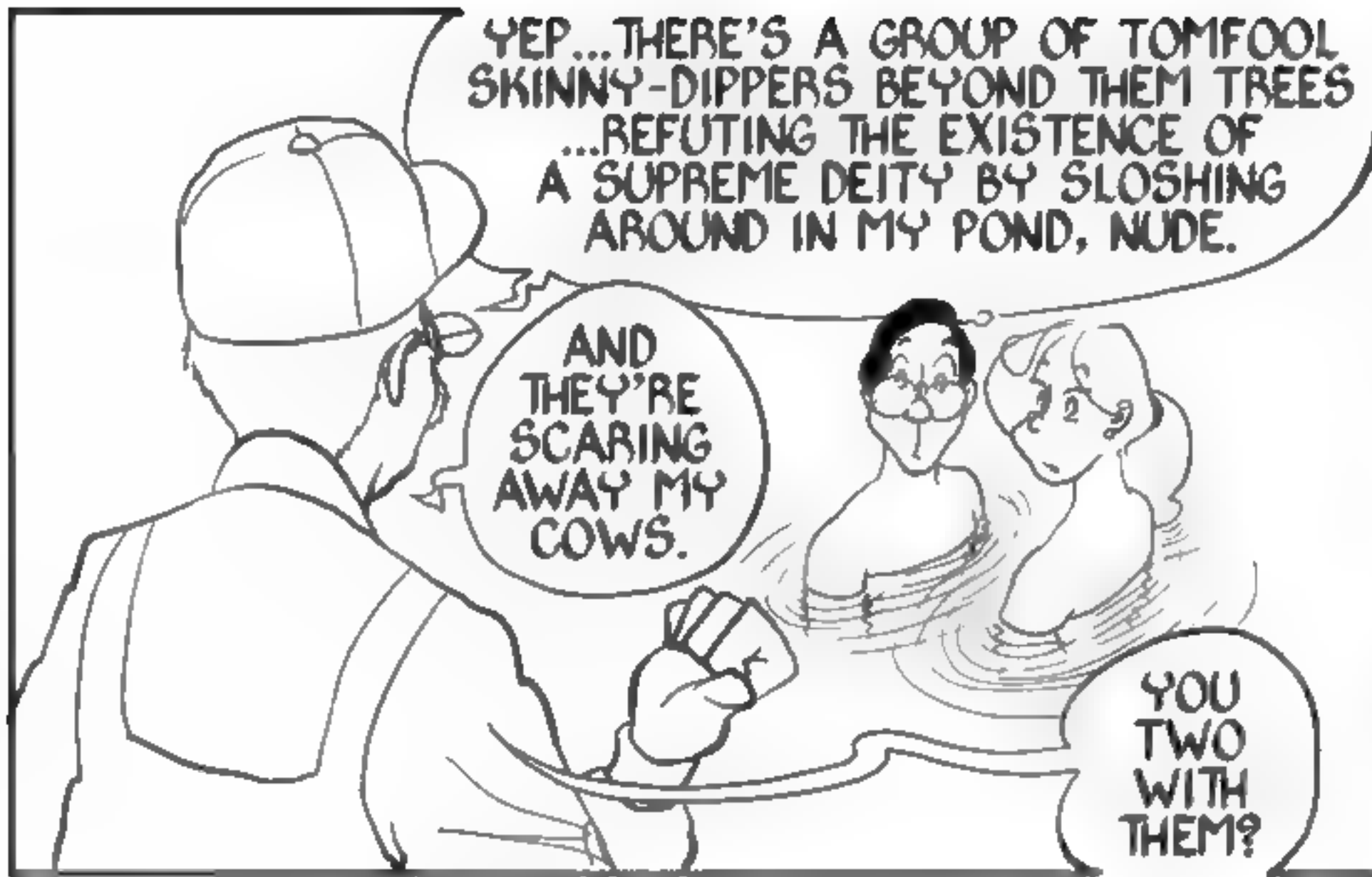




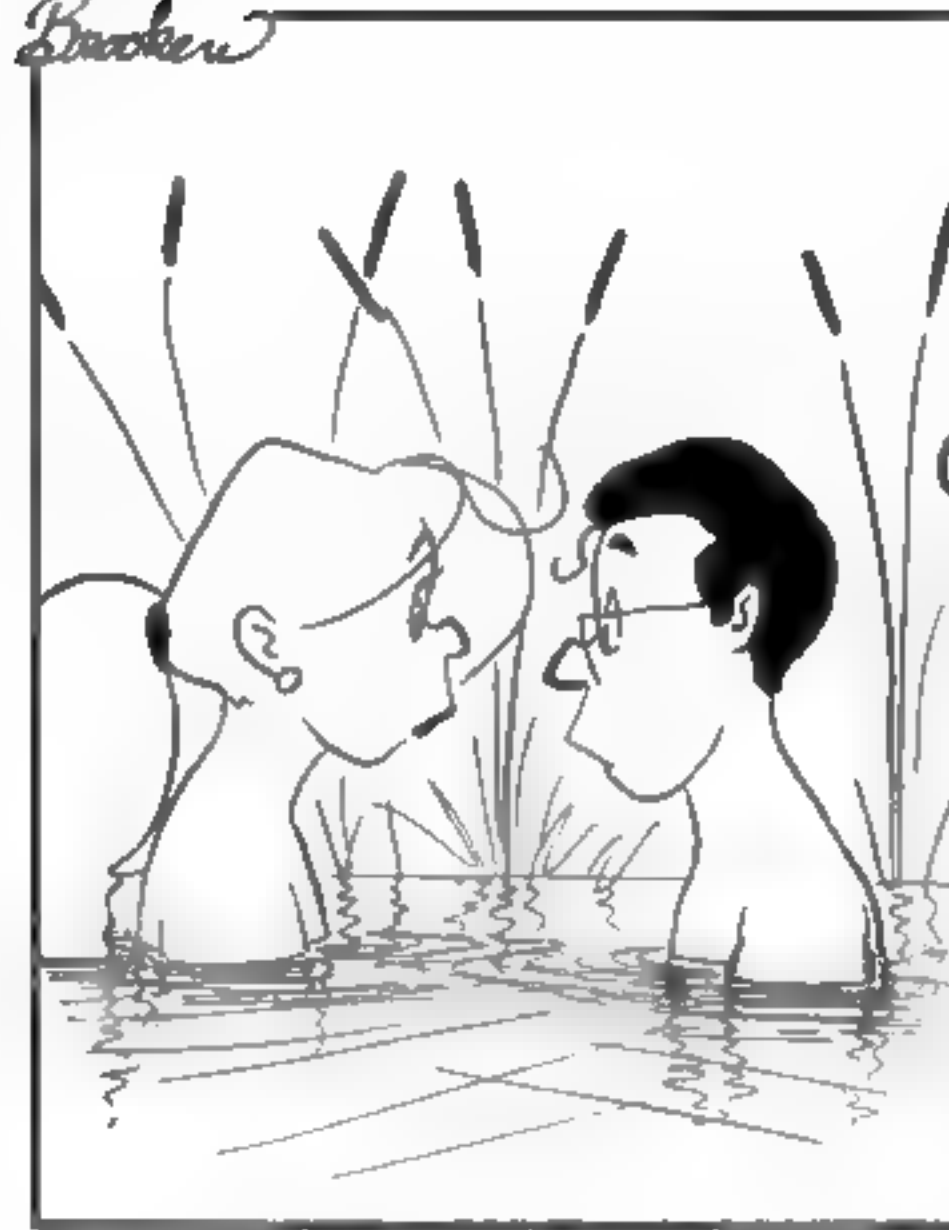








*Brooke*





FACT IS, I GET ALL SORTSA GROUPS  
HERE...BUNCHA YAHOOOS ADVOCATING  
POLYTHEISM WHILE THEY SMEAR THEM-  
SELVES WITH GERMAN POTATO SALAD  
AND HOWL AT THE MOON...ATHEIST  
QUILTING BEES...EXISTENTIAL KARAOKE  
NIGHT...WHY,  
I COULD  
GO ON  
ALL DAY...



HOW  
MUCH  
TO STOP  
YOU?

TWELVE-  
NINETY-FIVE.

SOLD!

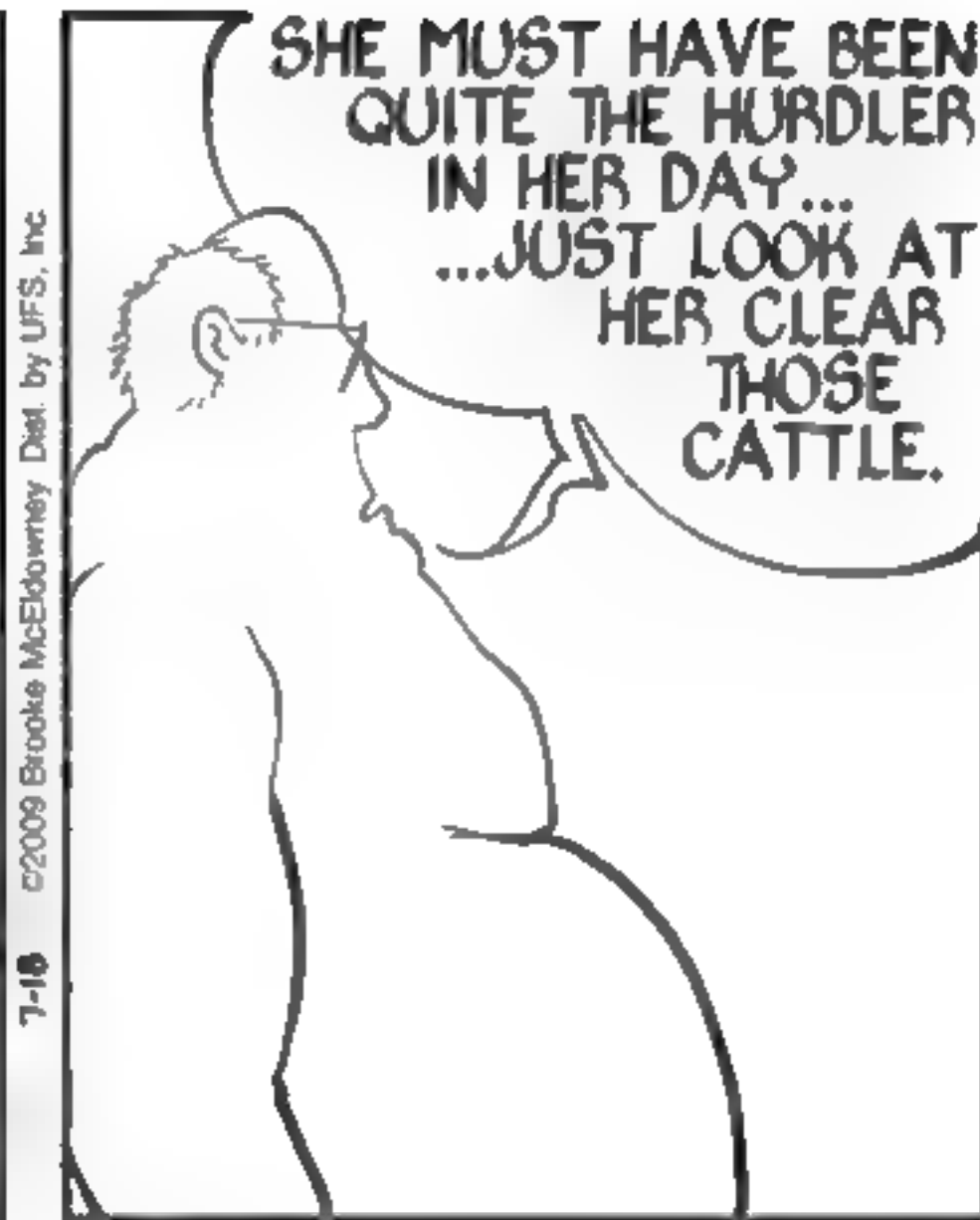
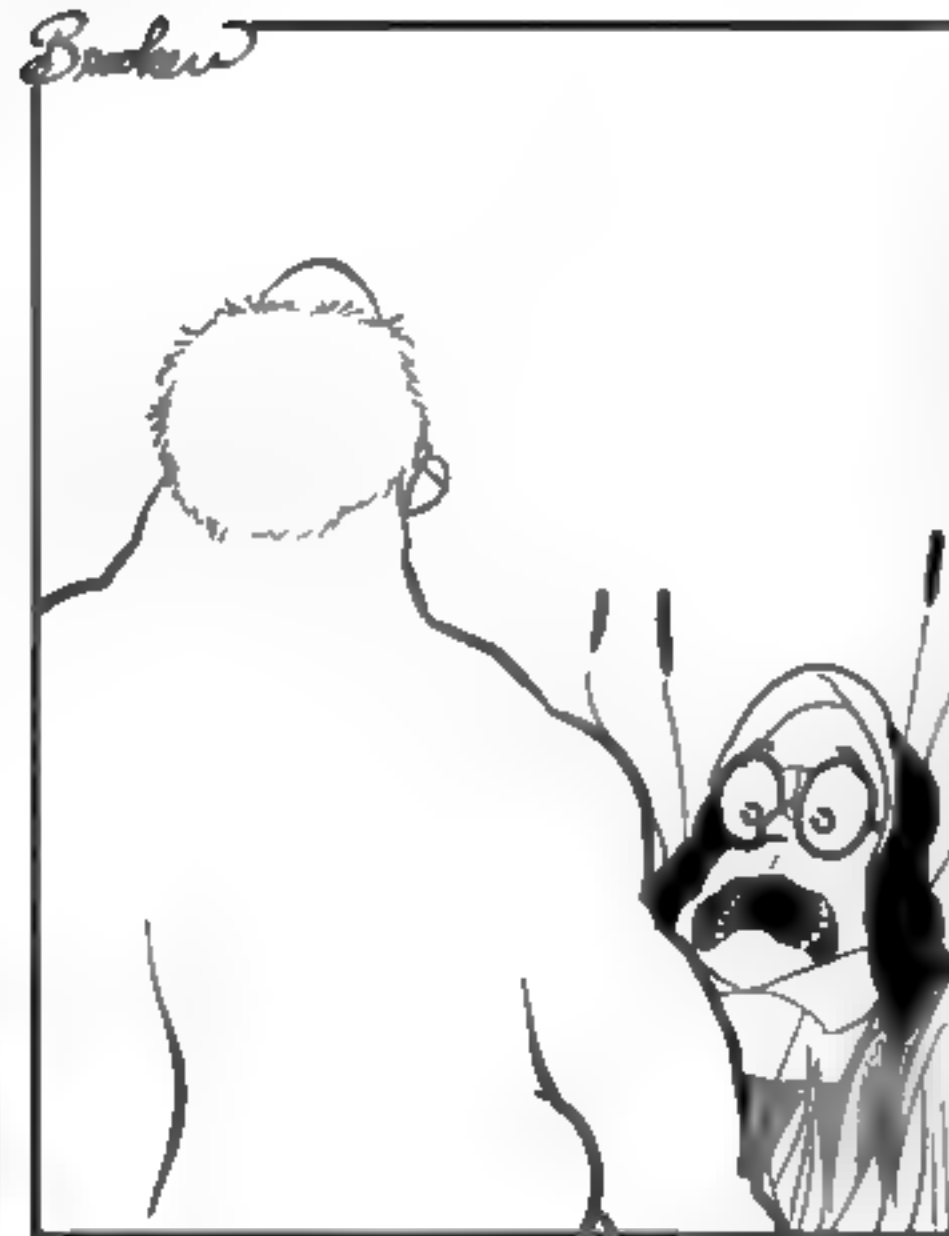


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MY  
HERO.

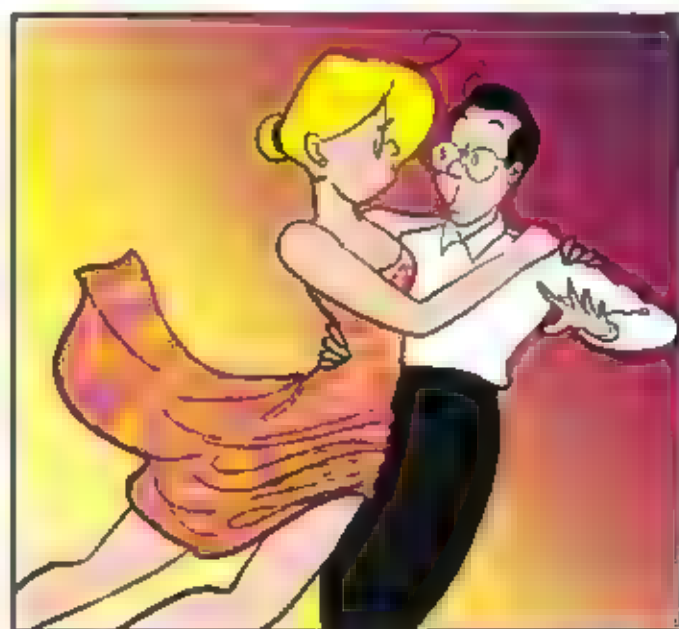
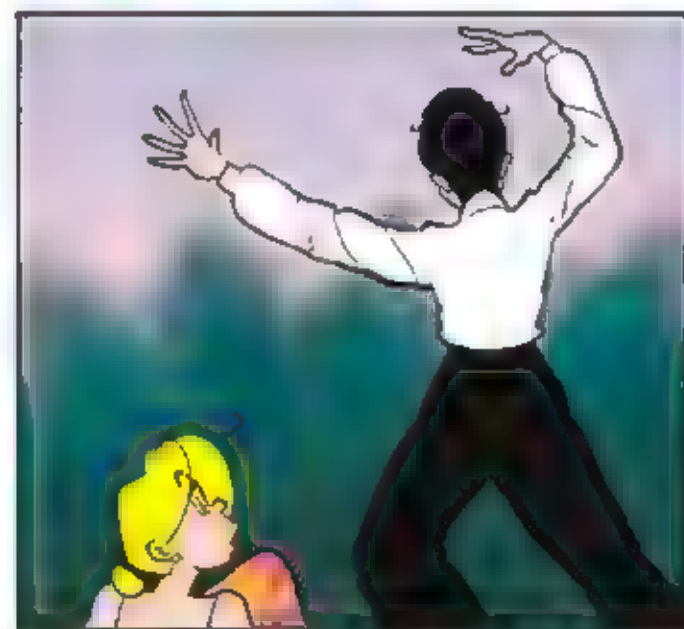
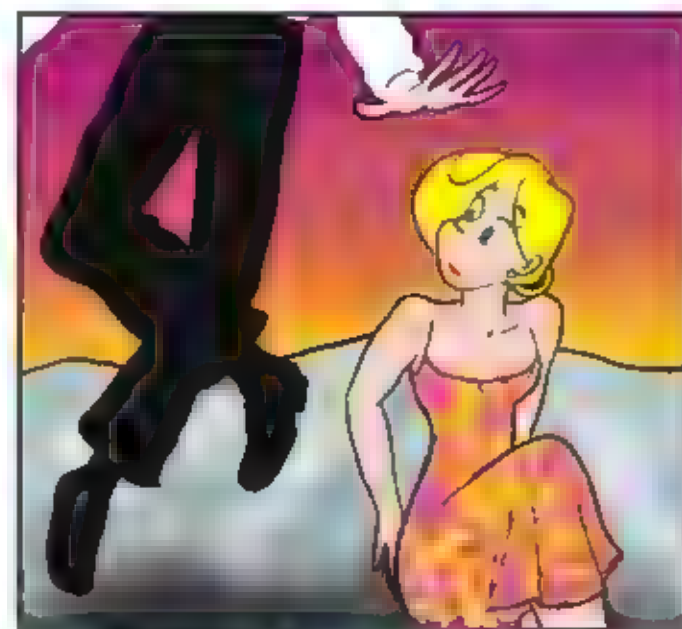
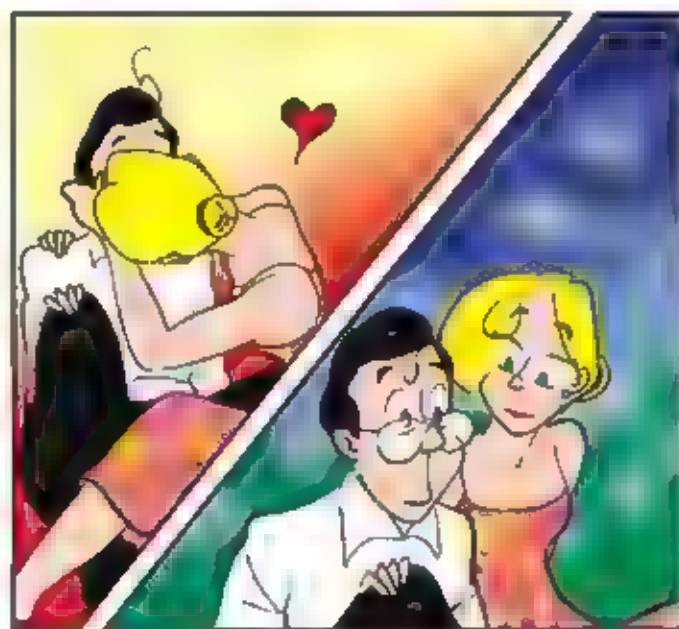
AND  
FOR  
ONLY  
\$12.95.







PERFORMING ARTS ARE CURIOUS.  
WHAT REAL SITUATION COULD  
CAUSE A PERSON TO EXPRESS  
HOW HE  
FEELS BY  
SUDDENLY  
RESORTING  
TO DANCE?





IT'S NICE LIVING IN  
NEW YORK, BUT I'M  
ALWAYS GLAD  
WHEN I CAN  
COME BACK  
HOME TO  
NEW  
HAMPSHIRE.

IT WAS A SHAME WHEN  
THE STATE LOST ITS NATIONAL  
EMBLEM...THAT HUGE  
STONE FACE ON THE  
CLIFF SIDE IN  
FRANCONIA  
NOTCH.



ACTUALLY,  
I DON'T THINK  
NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DID.



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Brooke

HI, SISTER STEVEN.  
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?

DIDN'T YOU KNOW? IT'S ONE OF MY GUILTY PLEASURES...



...IMMERSING MYSELF IN MUD, SLUGS AND POND SCUM. I NEVER MISS A CHANCE.

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AND I SEE YOUR GUILTY PLEASURE:

BATHING NAKED IN EACH OTHER'S EMBRACE.



OH... WE'RE NOT BATHING NAKED.

AH...I SEE. YOU'VE BEEN HAMMERING OUT THOSE LAST CODICILS TO TIGHTEN UP YOUR UNFRIENDLY TAKEOVER OF THE WORLD FLANGE MASS-PRODUCTION MARKET.



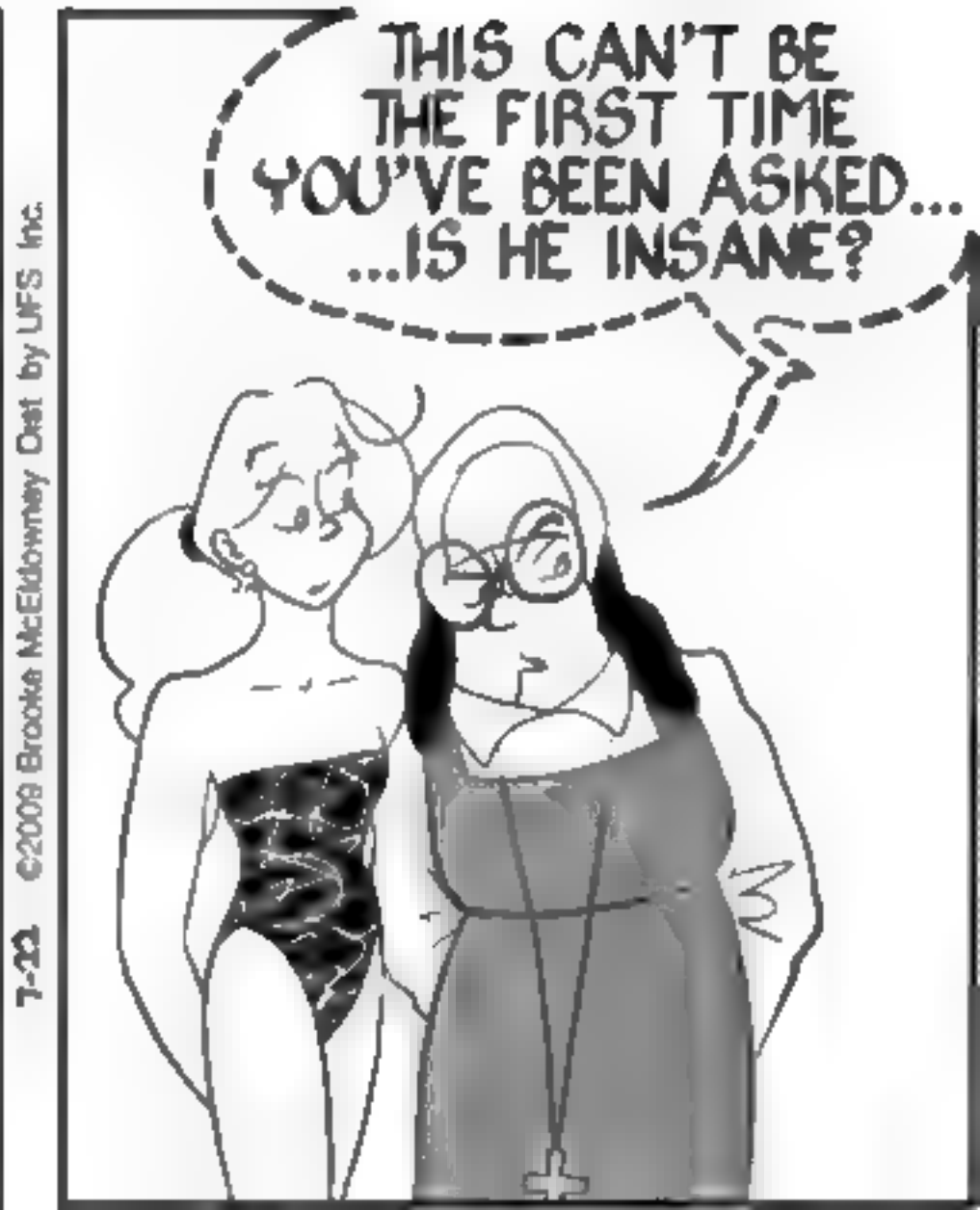
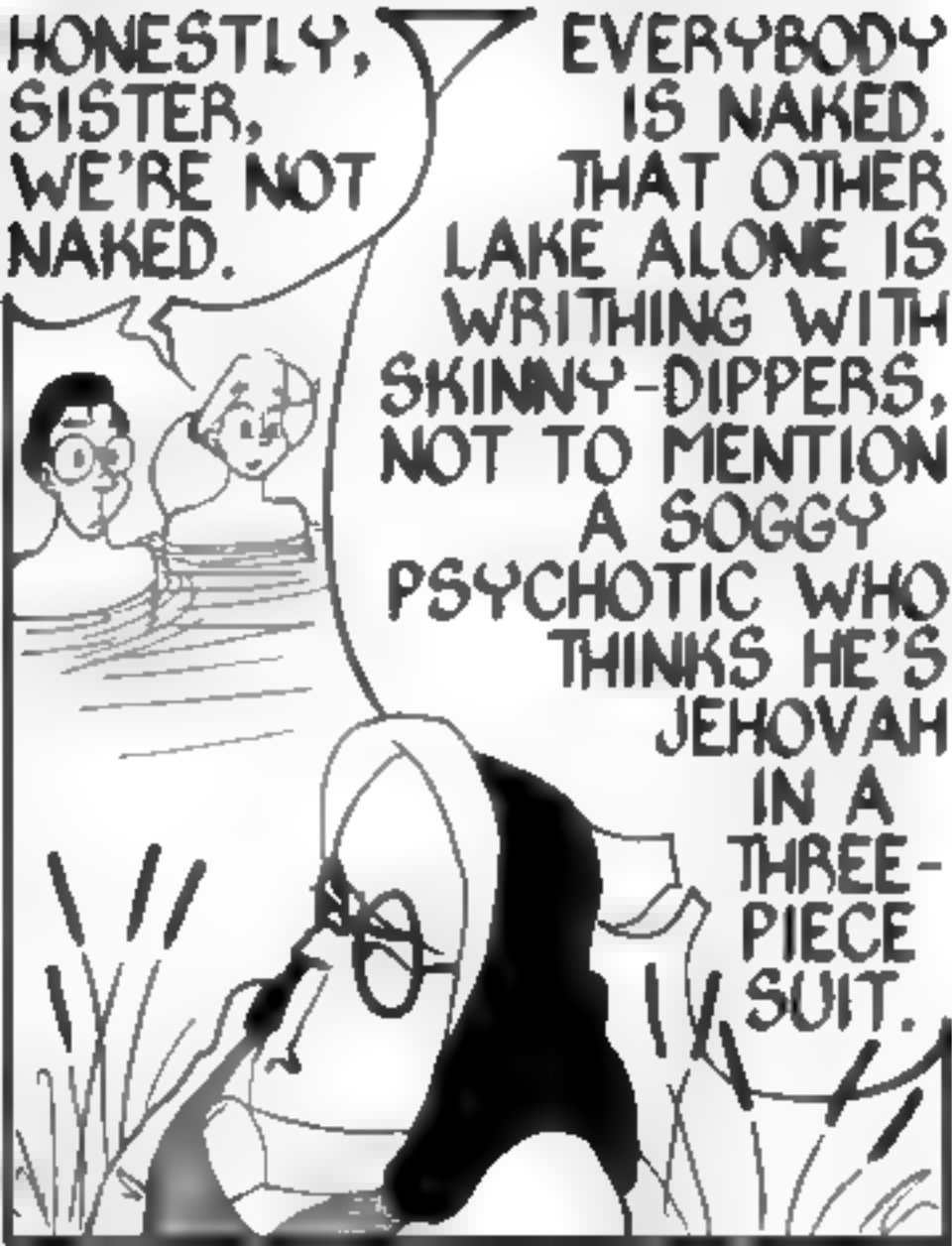
I FORGOT WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE DRENCHED IN A TORRENT OF HER COLD, MENACING SARCASTISM.



IT MAKES ME FEEL LIKE A KID AGAIN.

Becker









DO YOU THINK THOSE POOR  
PEOPLE SLOSHING AROUND  
NAKED IN THE LAKE WILL  
EVER FIND  
THEIR  
CLOTHES?  
I MEAN,  
ARE THEY  
TOO WELL  
HIDDEN?



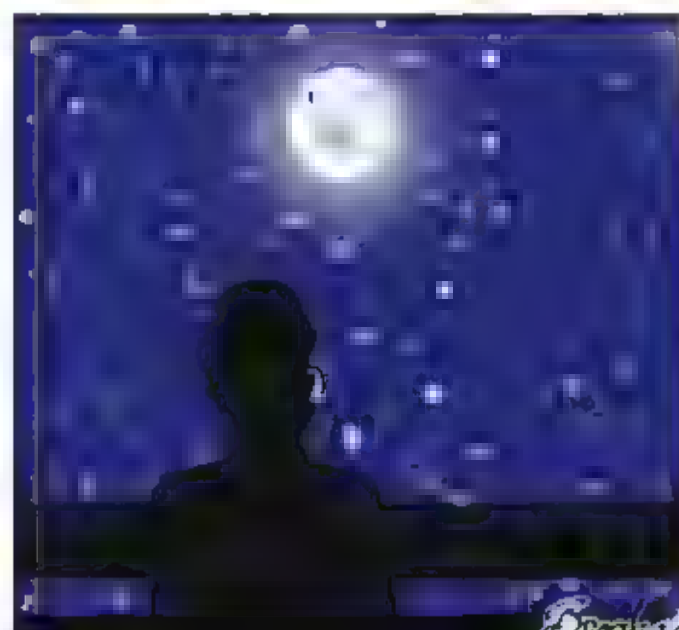
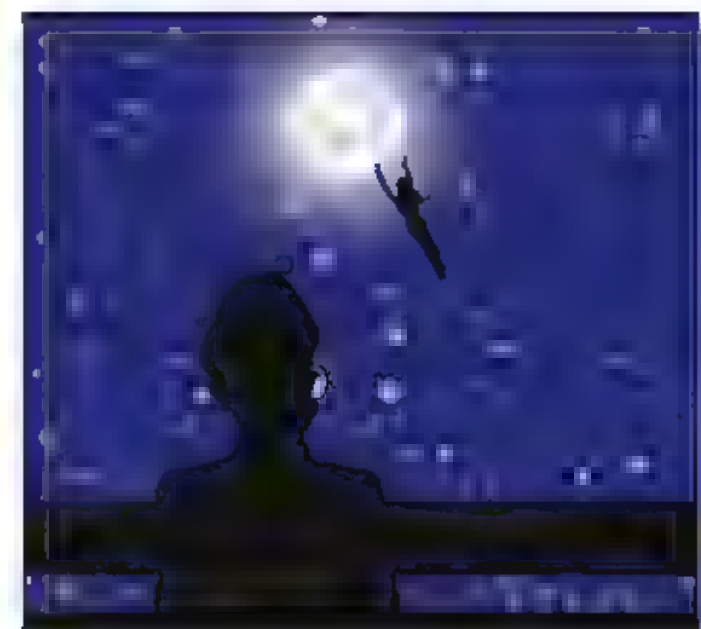
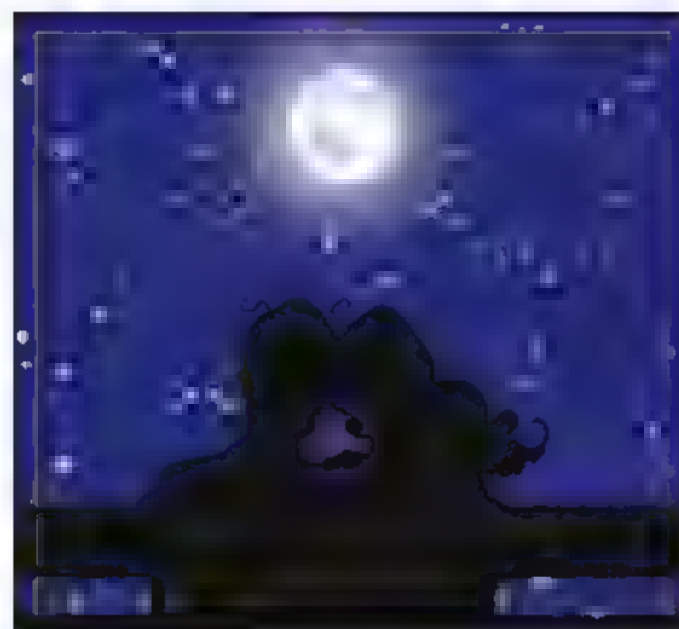
YES...I SUPPOSE THEY  
MAY BE A LITTLE TOO  
WELL HIDDEN.



YOU  
NEVER  
SAW  
ME!

WE  
NEVER  
MET.





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WERE YOU, BY ANY CHANCE, JUST FOR A MOMENT, SUPER-LATIVE GIRL?



WHAT MAKES YOU ASK THAT?









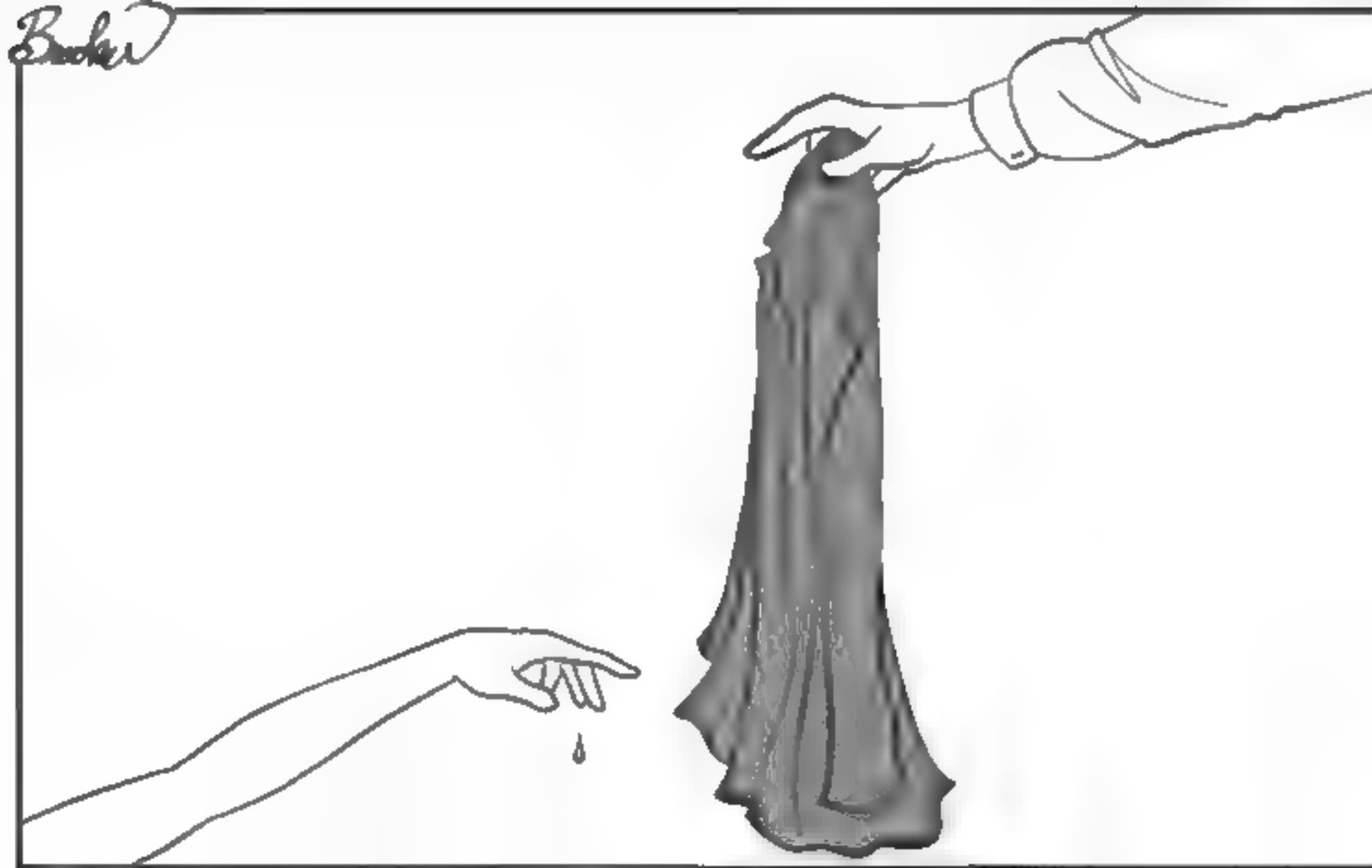


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WHY DID YOU SAY  
YOU WANTED  
TO TURN MY BABY  
INTO THE FIRST OF  
A RACE OF SAPIENT  
COCKROACHES?

ACT THE PART, LOOK  
THE PART...I CREATED  
PEOPLE IN MY IMAGE,  
AND EVER SINCE YOU  
ALL HAVE BEEN A  
BLOODY, BEASTLY,  
UNBLUSHING  
EMBARRASS-  
MENT.

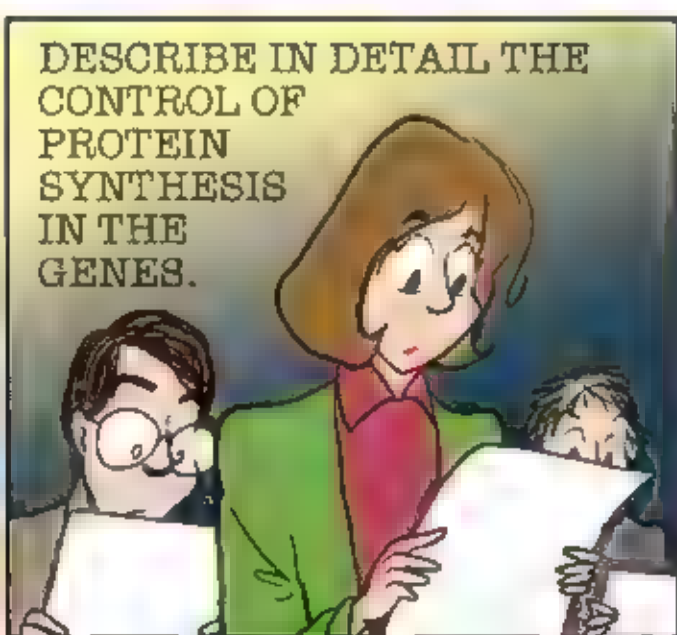
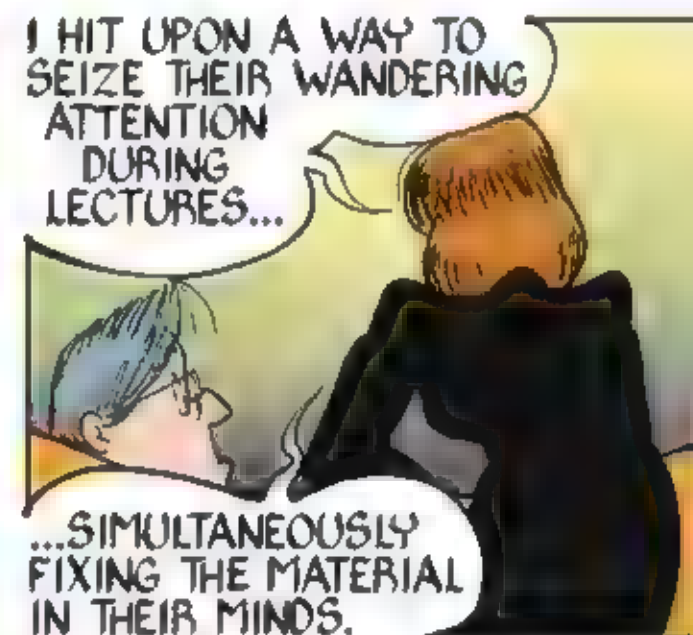
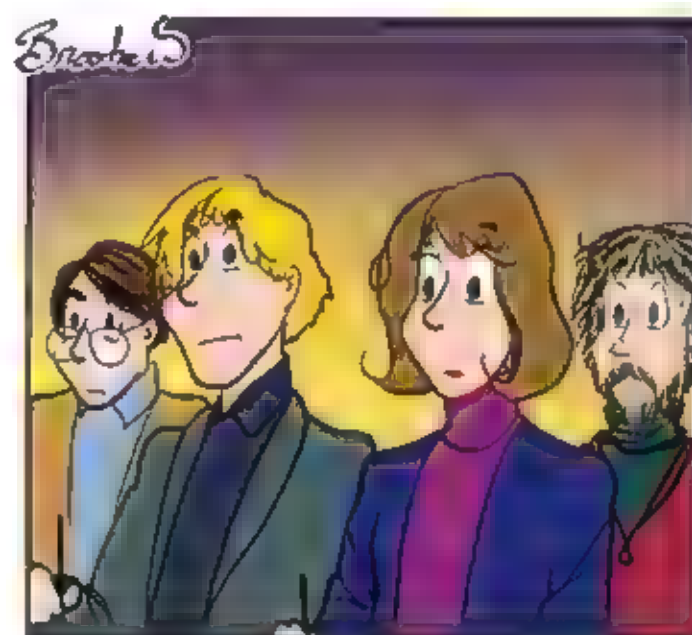
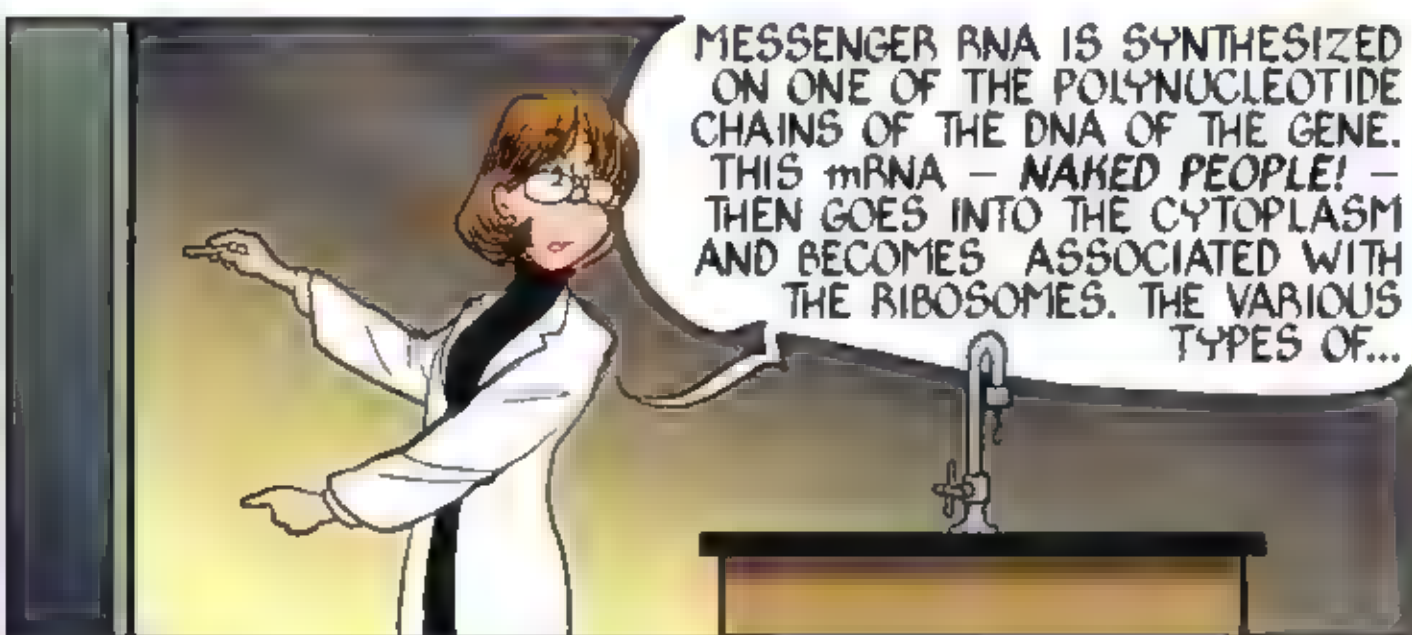
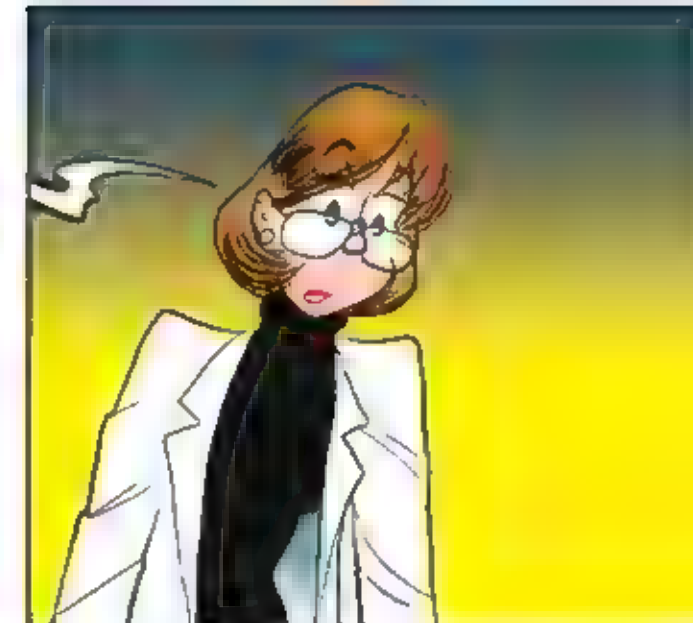
WHAT  
GAVE YOU  
THE RIGHT  
TO OPPOSE  
ME?

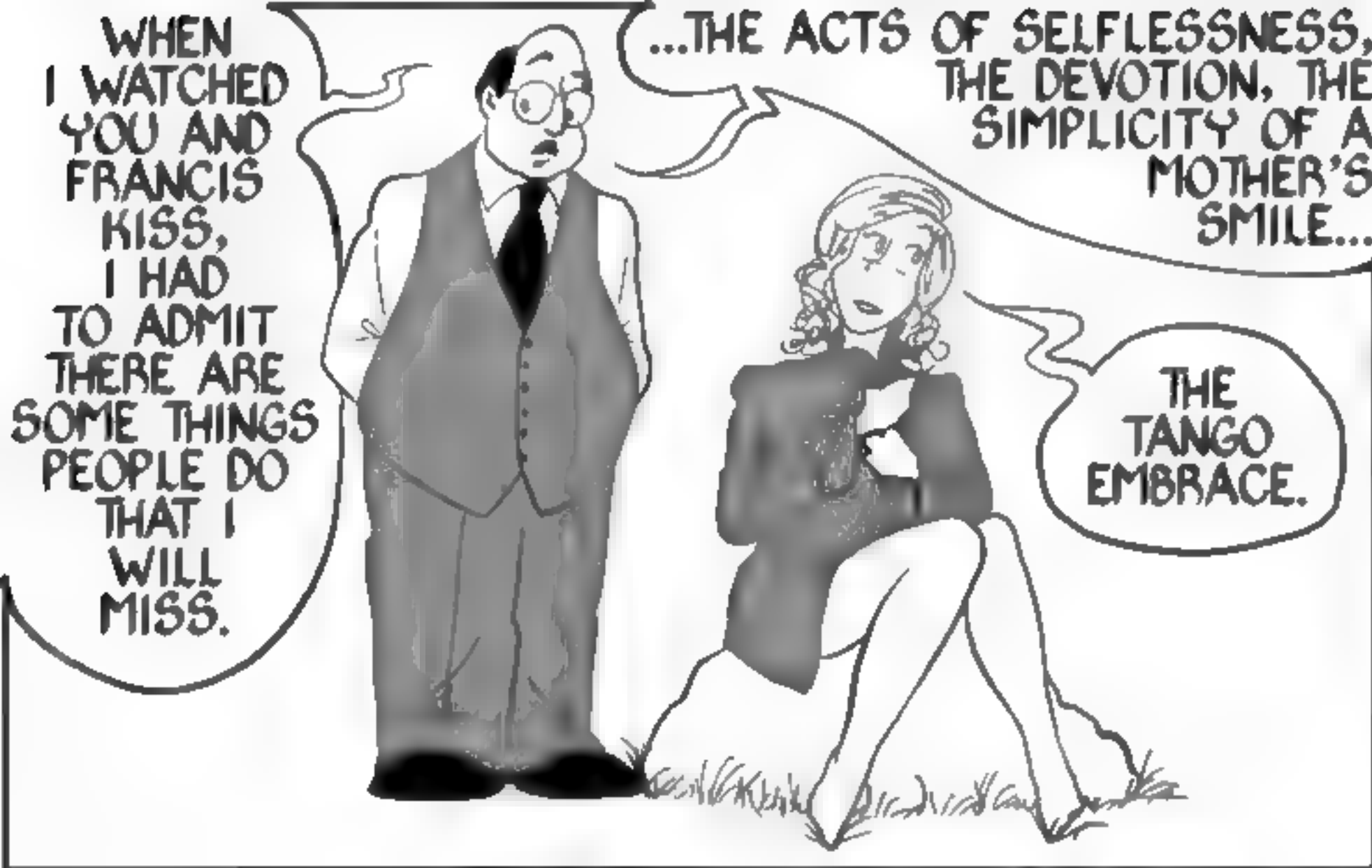
BECAUSE WHEN I HAVE MY  
BABY, I WANT TO BE ABLE  
TO LOOK IN HER OR HIS  
FACE AND SEE THE  
DIVINE IMAGE OF  
MY LORD LOOKING  
BACK.

*Backs*

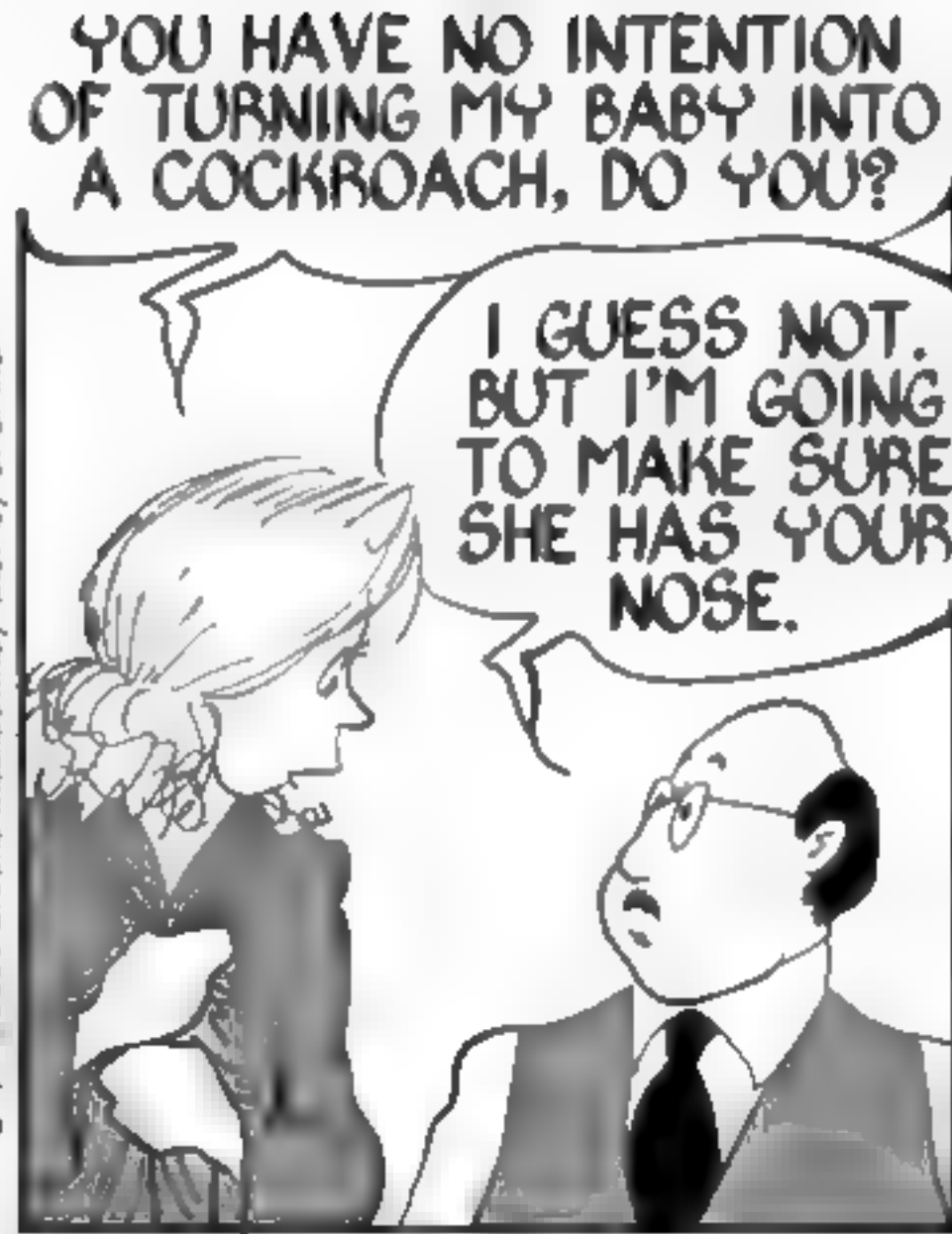
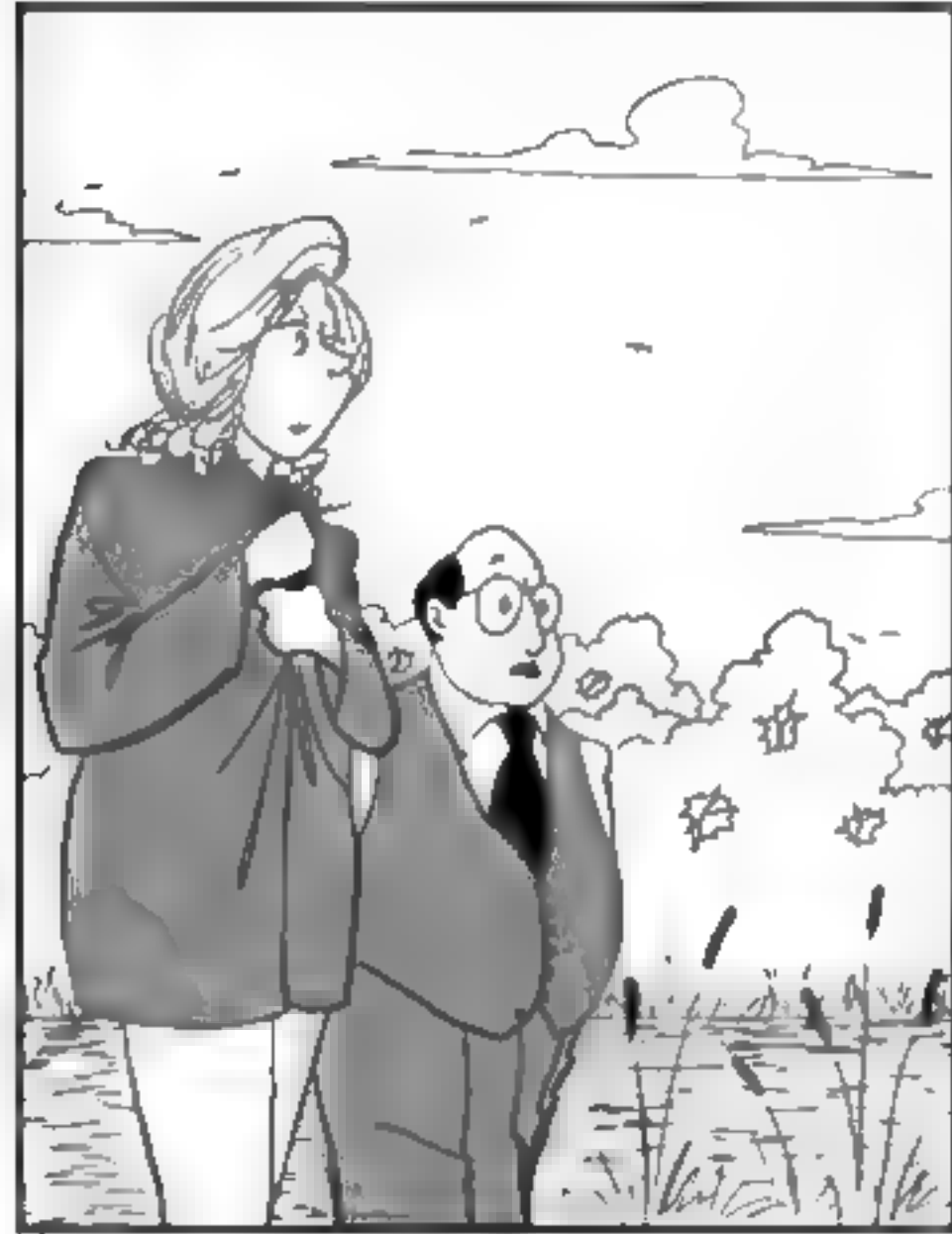
OH....  
...I SUPPOSE  
I CAN'T REALLY  
FAULT YOU  
THERE.

# 9 CHICKWEED LANE









DO YOU MIND IF I WEAR  
YOUR JACKET UNTIL WE  
FIND OUR CLOTHES?

OH...  
THEY'RE  
BEHIND THAT  
BOULDER.

THEN YOU KNEW  
ALL ALONG.  
...THANK YOU.

THANK  
YOU  
FOR NOT  
FORSAKING  
ME.

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JUST LET  
ME GET DRESSED,  
AND I'LL GIVE YOU  
BACK YOUR...

...JACKET.

Brooke





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SO I TOLD EDDA  
THAT, WITH THE  
RIGHT DRESS AND  
A BIT OF APPLIED  
EFFORT, I COULD  
BRING SETH AROUND  
IN FAIRLY QUICK  
ORDER. BUT SHE  
LAUGHED AND  
SAID FORGET  
IT, SHE HAD  
ALREADY  
TRIED.



IT'S  
GREAT  
HOW YOU  
TWO HAVE  
BEEN  
ABLE TO  
OPEN UP  
TO EACH  
OTHER.

*Brooke*



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IT'S GREAT HOW YOU  
TWO HAVE BEEN ABLE  
TO OPEN UP TO  
EACH OTHER.



YOU ONCE TRIED  
TO SEDUCE SETH!!!?  
...HOW CAN YOU  
POSSIBLY EXPLAIN  
THAT AWAY?!



MARK AND  
I WERE  
FRISBEEING  
IN THE  
PARK,  
BUT  
IT'S  
SO  
HOT...

...I MEAN, I'M  
STREAMING  
WITH  
SWEAT.



Brooke



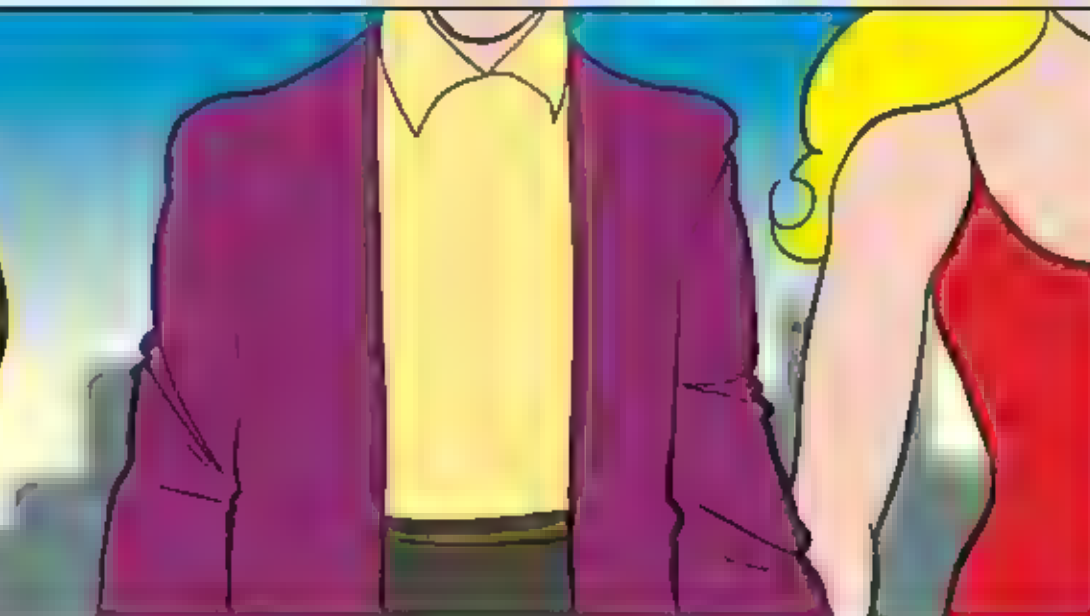
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YOU ASKED ME  
SOMETHING?

I WITHDRAW  
THE QUESTION.



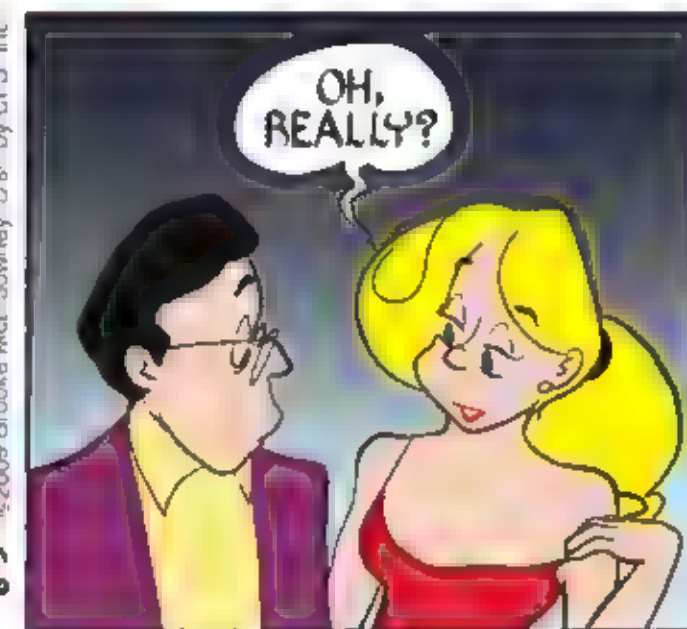
# 9 CHICKWEED LANE



WHEN ONE HAS KNOWN ANOTHER PERSON AS LONG AS WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER, AND ONE HAS EXPERIENCED THE HIGH DEGREE OF INTIMACY THAT WE SHARE, I SUPPOSE IT IS ONLY NATURAL THAT ONE COULD EXPECT LITTLE MORE IN THE RELATIONSHIP THAT WILL TAKE ONE'S BREATH AWAY...



...OR LEAVE ONE SPEECHLESS.



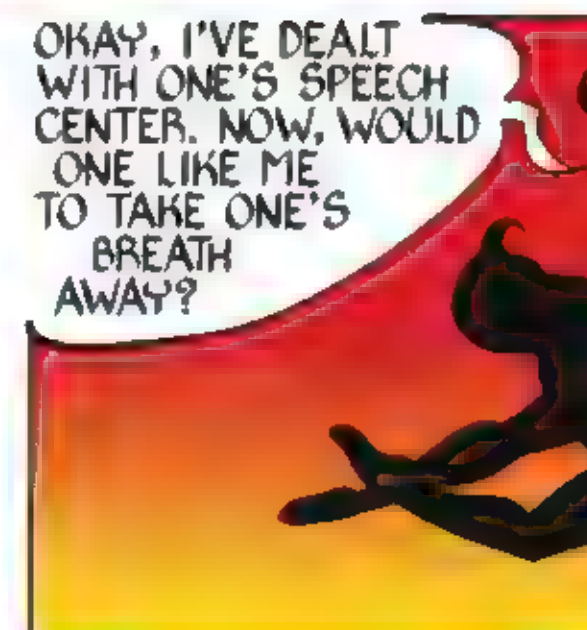
OH, REALLY?



...B'UH...  
...HNUH  
WUH,  
ANUH  
NOO...



...FFF...  
...WHA  
NUH  
BUH  
WHOO.



OKAY, I'VE DEALT WITH ONE'S SPEECH CENTER. NOW, WOULD ONE LIKE ME TO TAKE ONE'S BREATH AWAY?



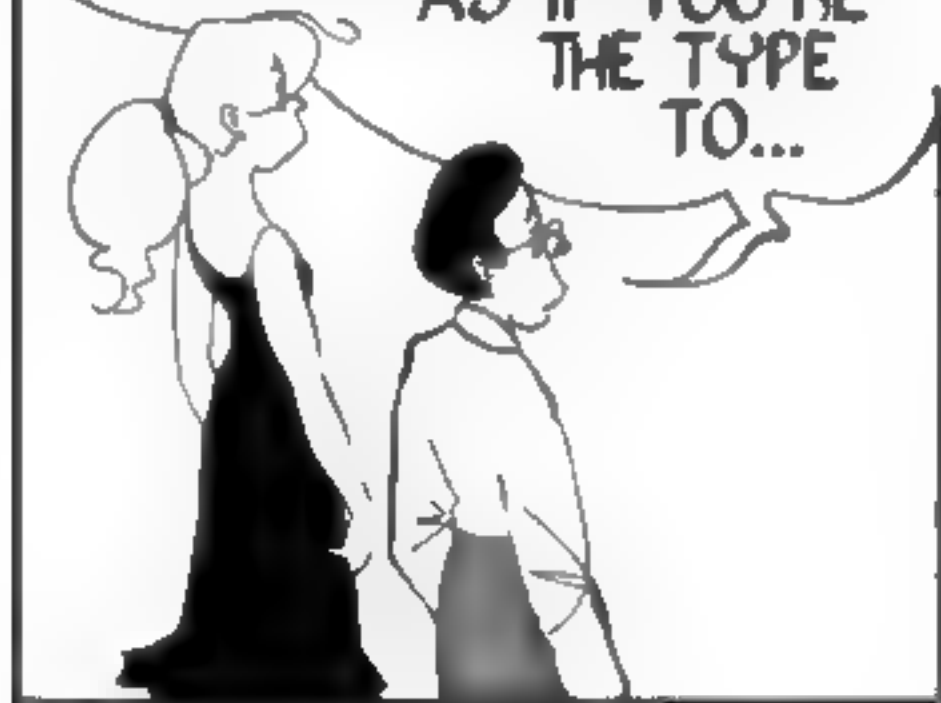
...WONGH  
DUH  
BLUH...

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Brooke



I CAN ENTIRELY UNDERSTAND  
YOUR IMPULSE ONCE TO  
SEDUCE SETH. BUT I CAN'T  
QUITE PICTURE YOU AS  
A SEDUCTRESS. I MEAN,  
YOU'RE PRETTY AND  
I LOVE YOU, BUT IT'S NOT  
AS IF YOU'RE  
THE TYPE  
TO...



*Broken*



DID ANYONE ASK  
YOU TO MOLEST  
ME ON 79TH  
STREET!?



AND  
YOU  
COULD  
HAVE  
AT LEAST  
ONE HAIR  
OUT OF  
PLACE!



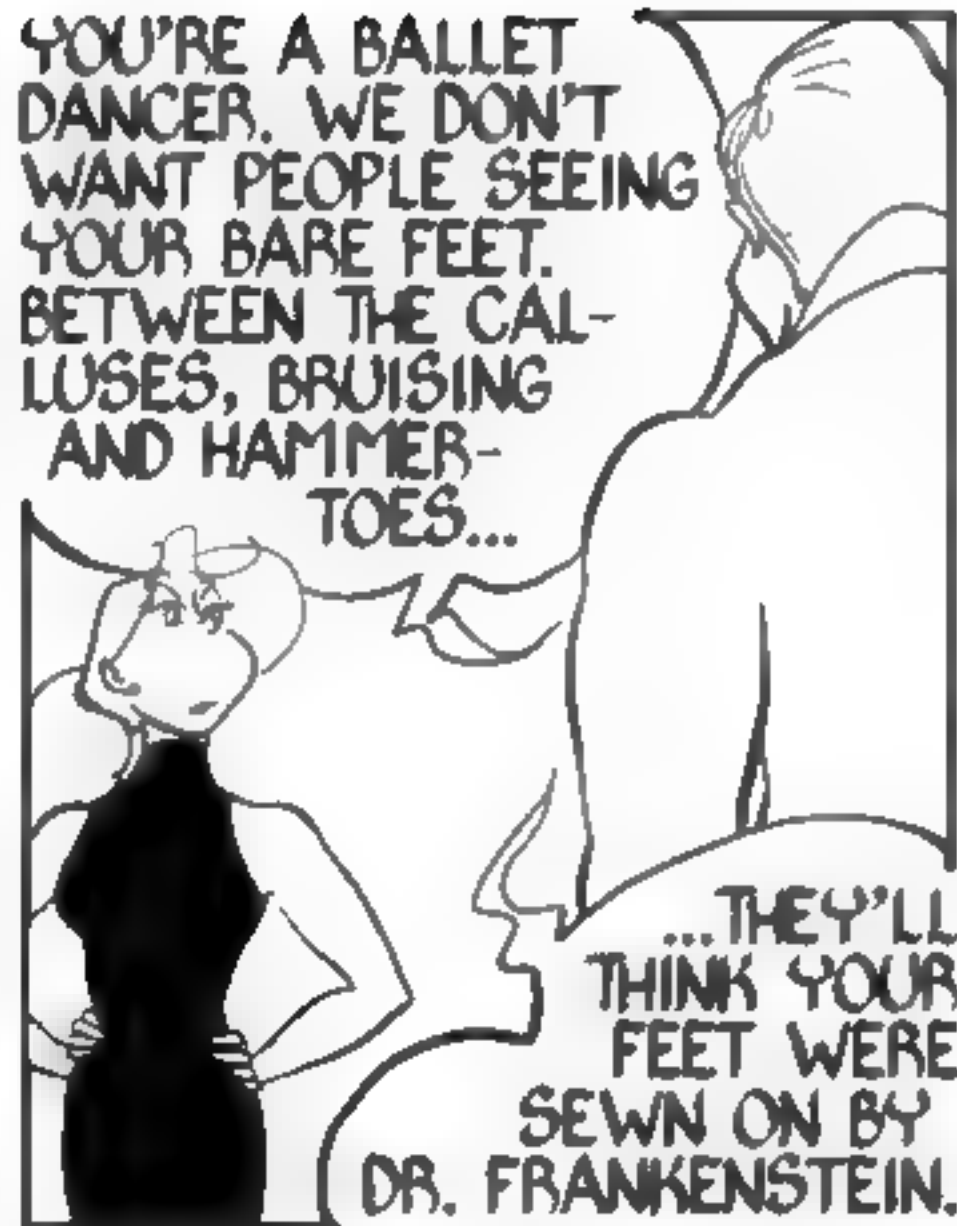




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OKAY...  
WHAT  
NOW?

I'VE  
INSTITUTED  
A NO-SHOES  
POLICY TO KEEP  
THE CARPET CLEAN.  
EDDA HAS TAKEN  
A STAND AND  
WON'T REMOVE  
HER SHOES.

42

EDDA,  
IT'S  
MARK.

HI,  
MARK.





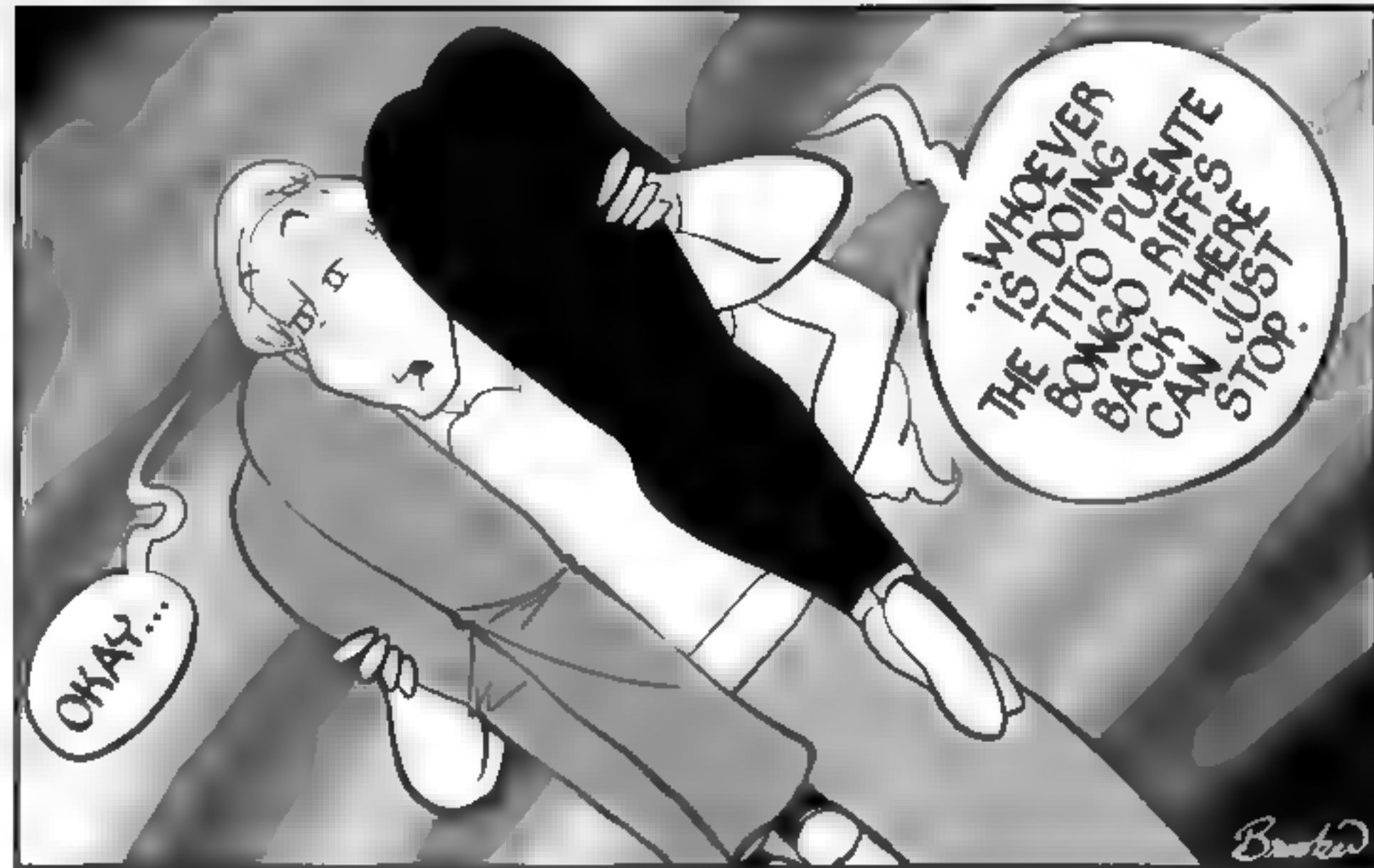
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SORRY, SETH. I HAVE TO  
AGREE WITH EDDA...THIS IS  
MORE THAN A LITTLE SILLY.  
I MEAN, IT'S NOT AS IF I'M  
GOING TO TAKE OFF MY  
SHOES JUST TO  
KEEP YOUR  
CARPET  
CLEAN.



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ALL RIGHT, I'LL GO  
BAREFOOT IN THE  
REST OF THE  
HOUSE...

...BUT IN  
MY BEDROOM,  
I WEAR MY SHOES.

DEAL.

OF COURSE, YOU CAN  
REMOVE YOUR SHOES IN  
HERE IF YOU  
WANT.

NOTHING  
DOING.

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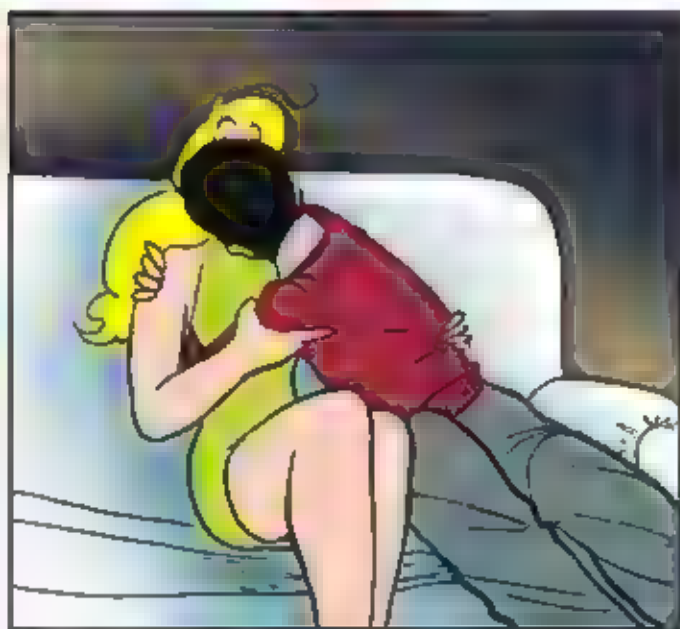
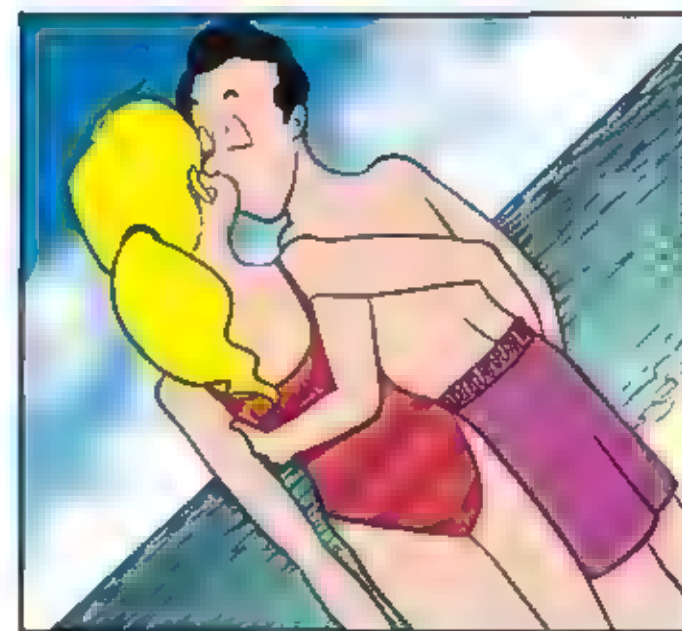
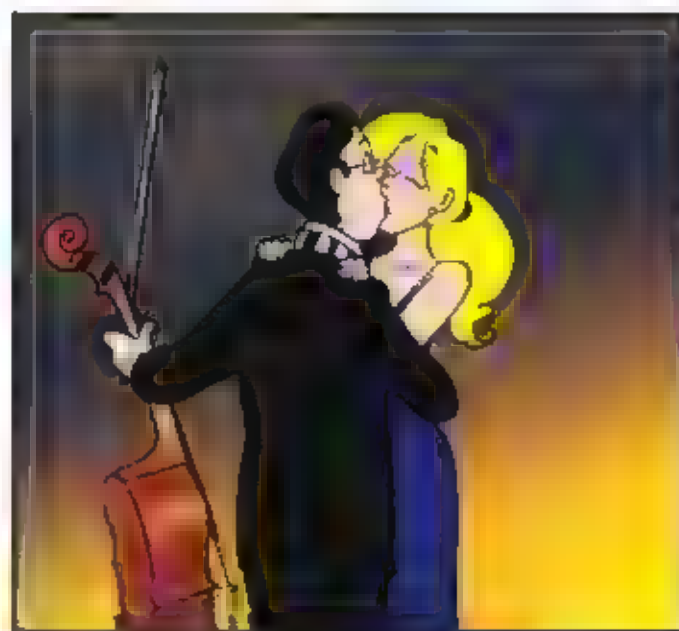
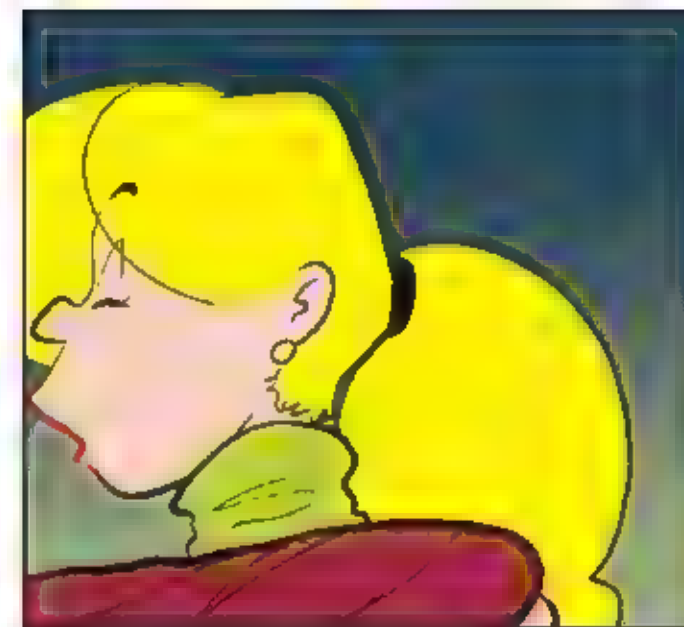
Brooke



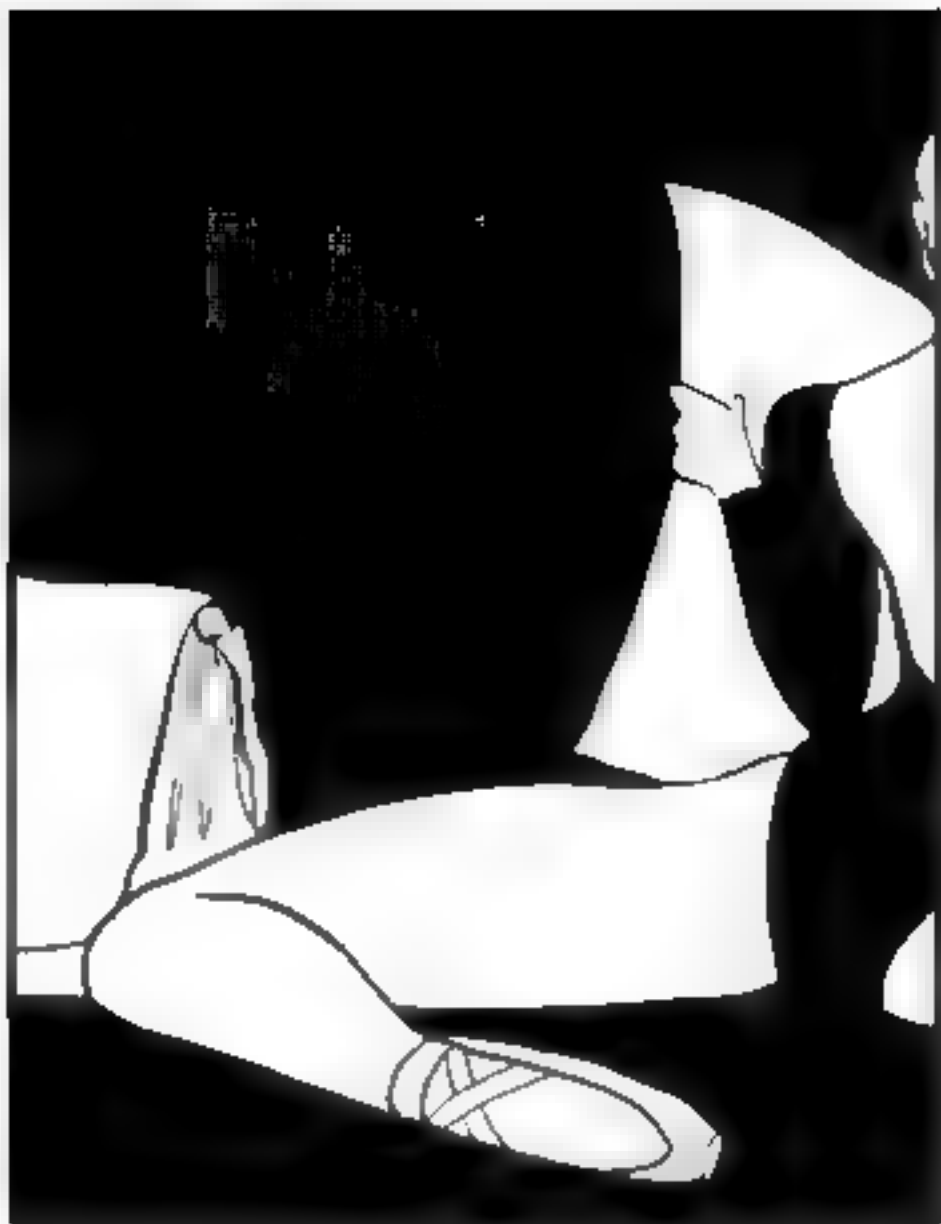
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# 9 CHICKWEED LANE











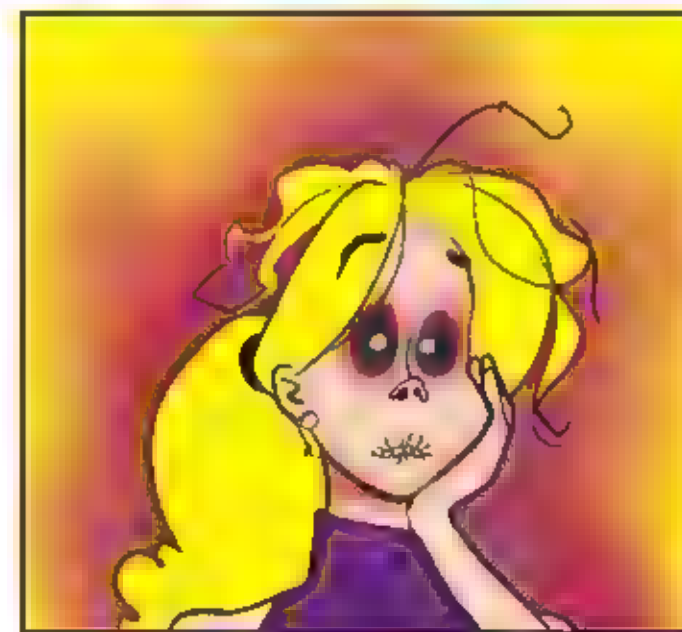
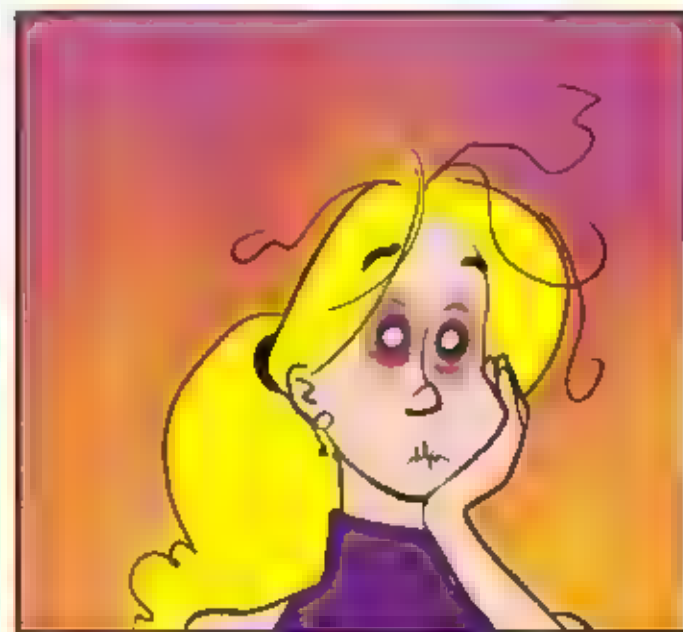
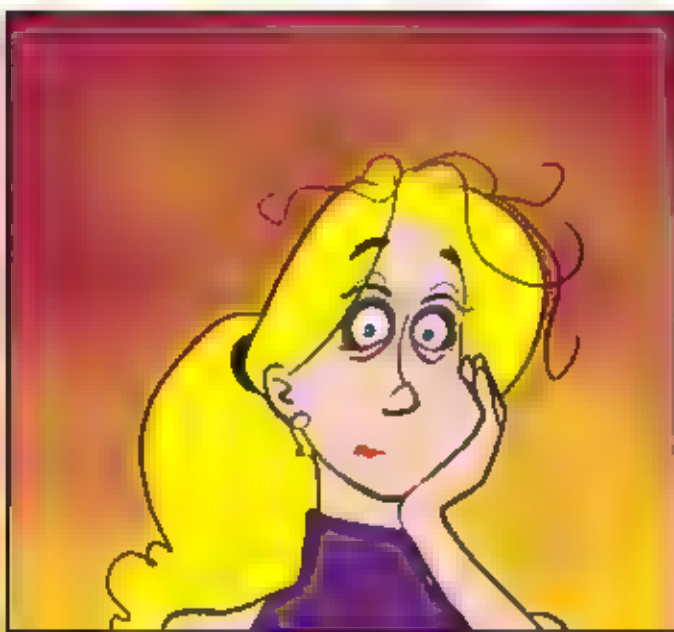
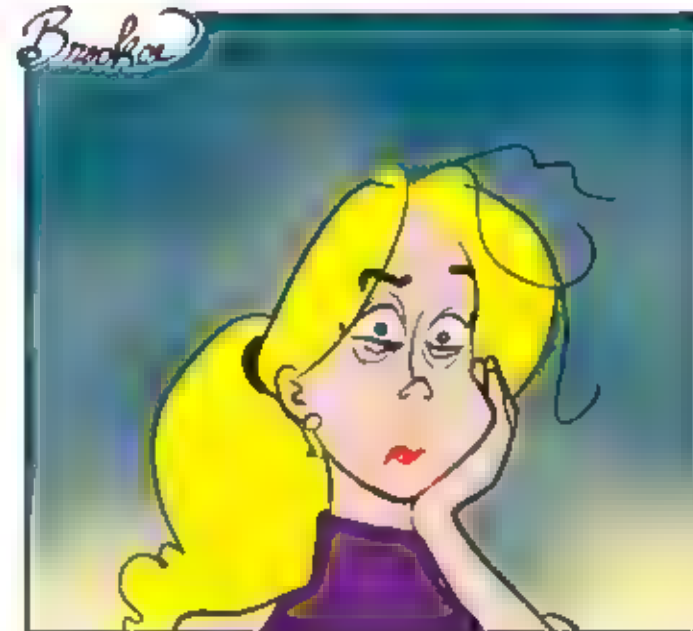
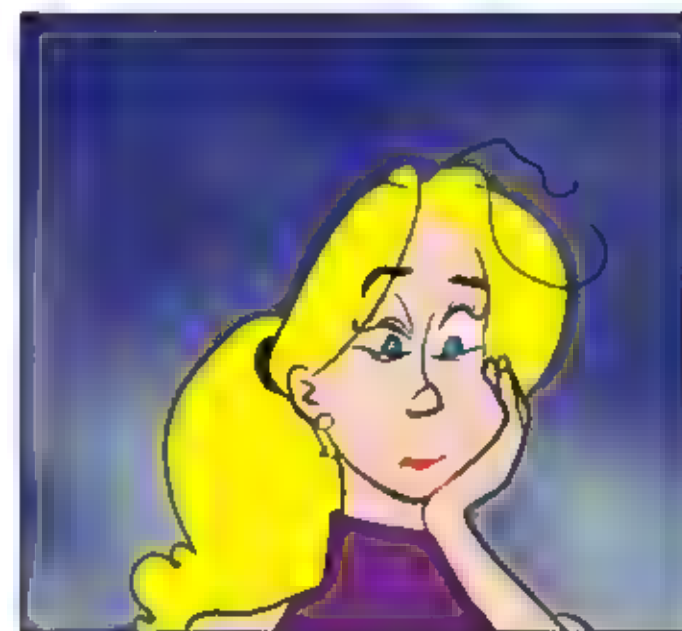
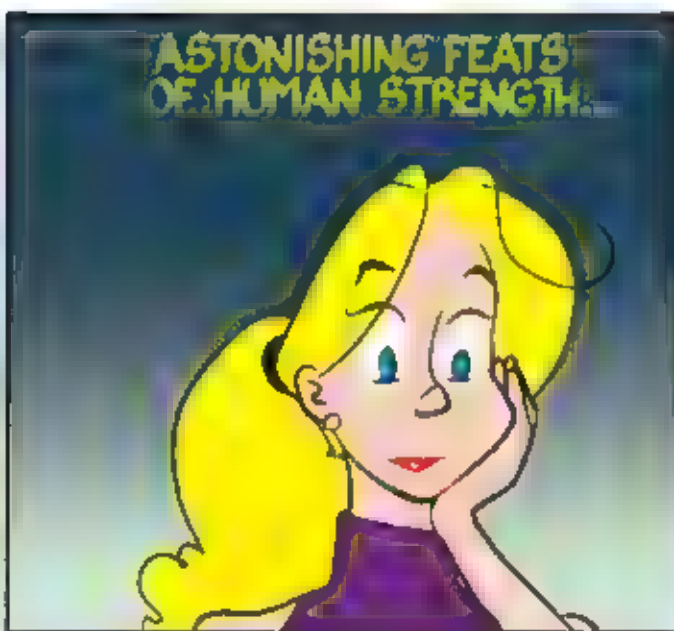
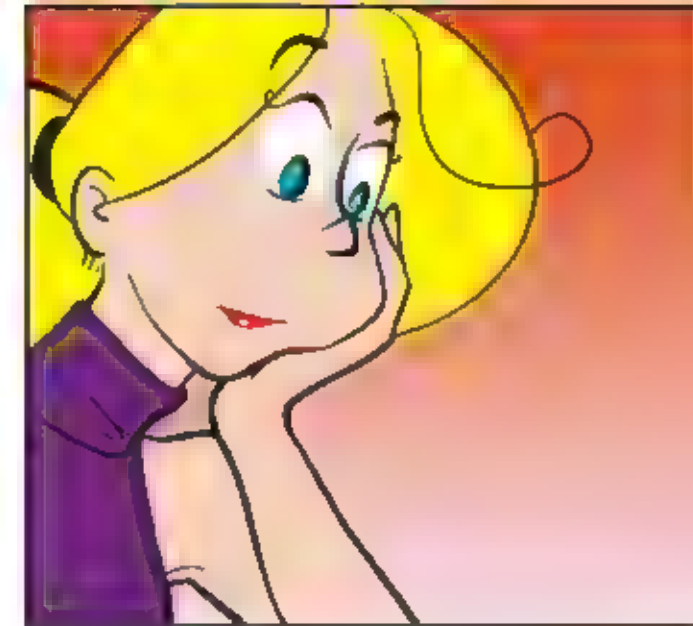
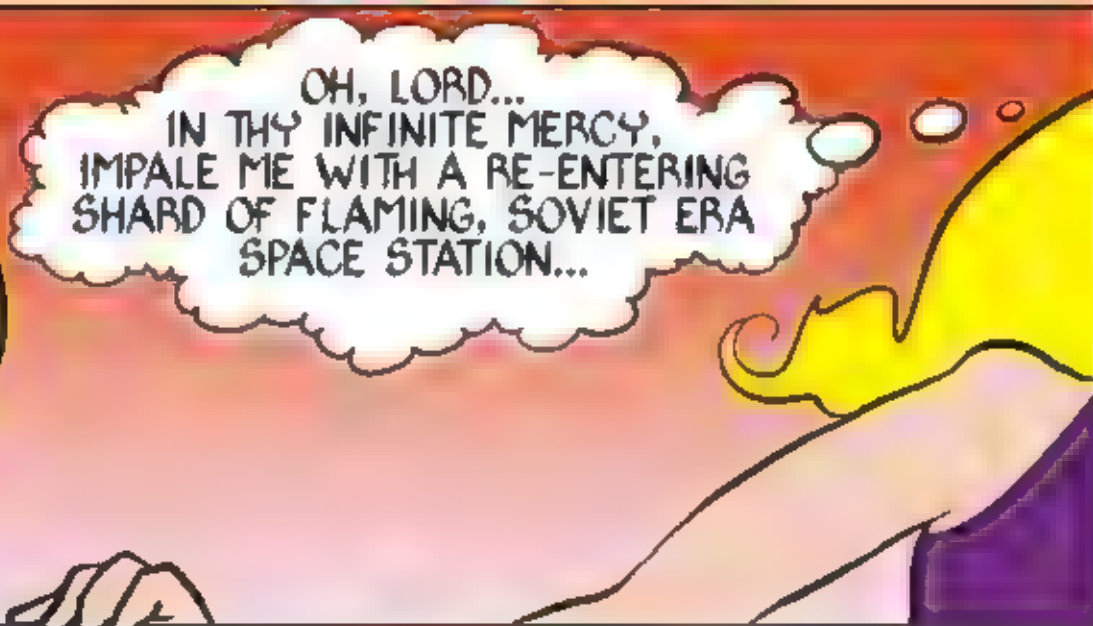






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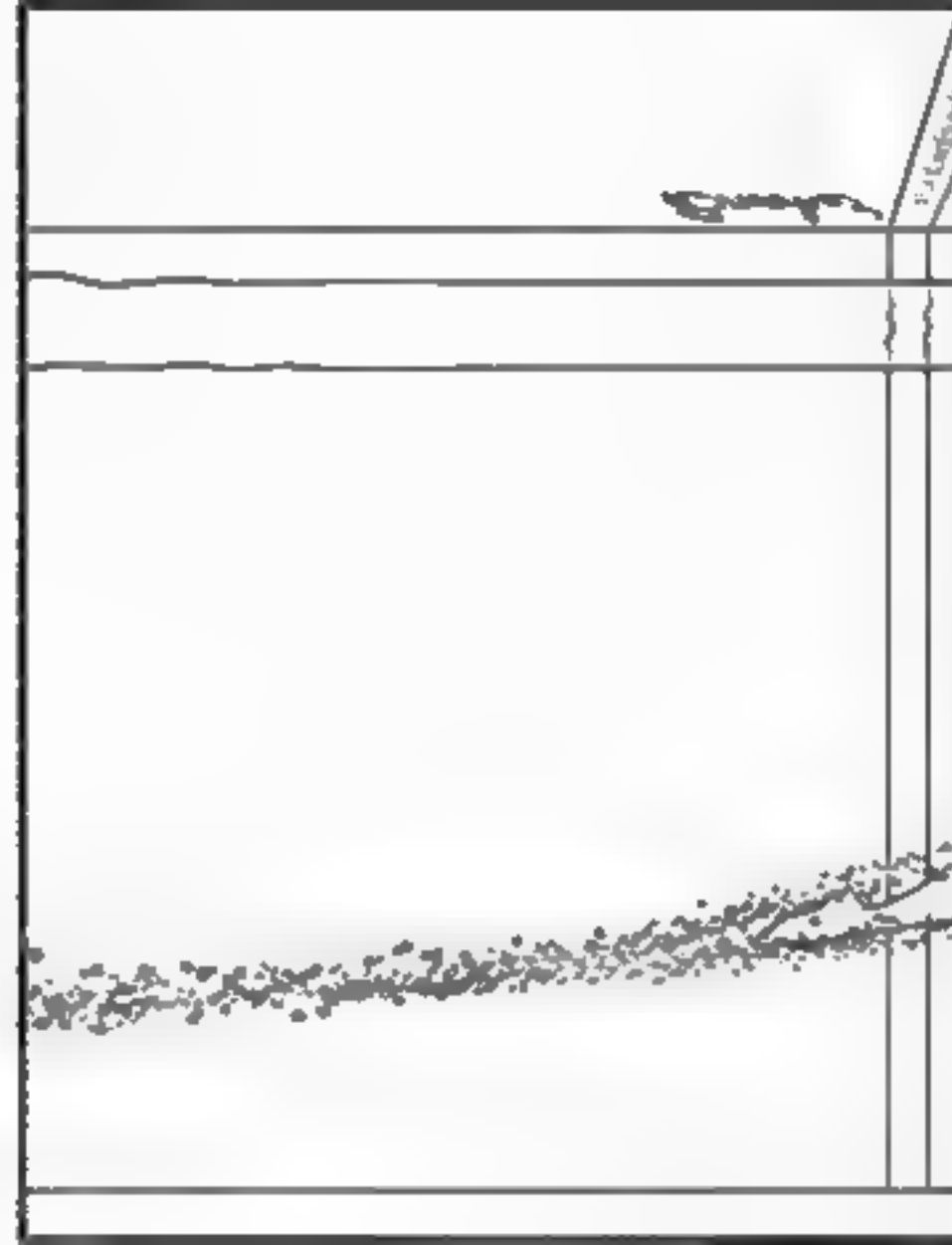
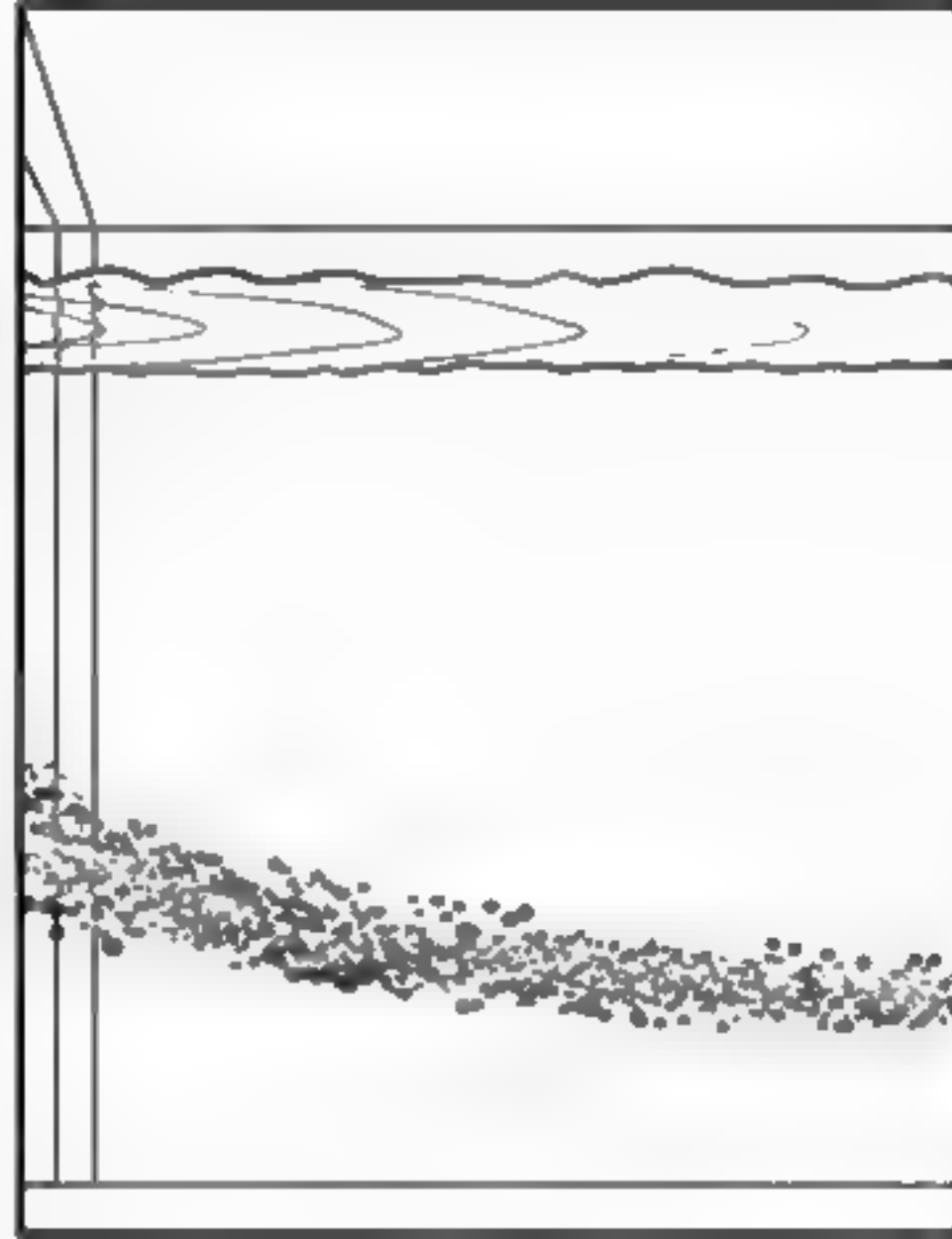
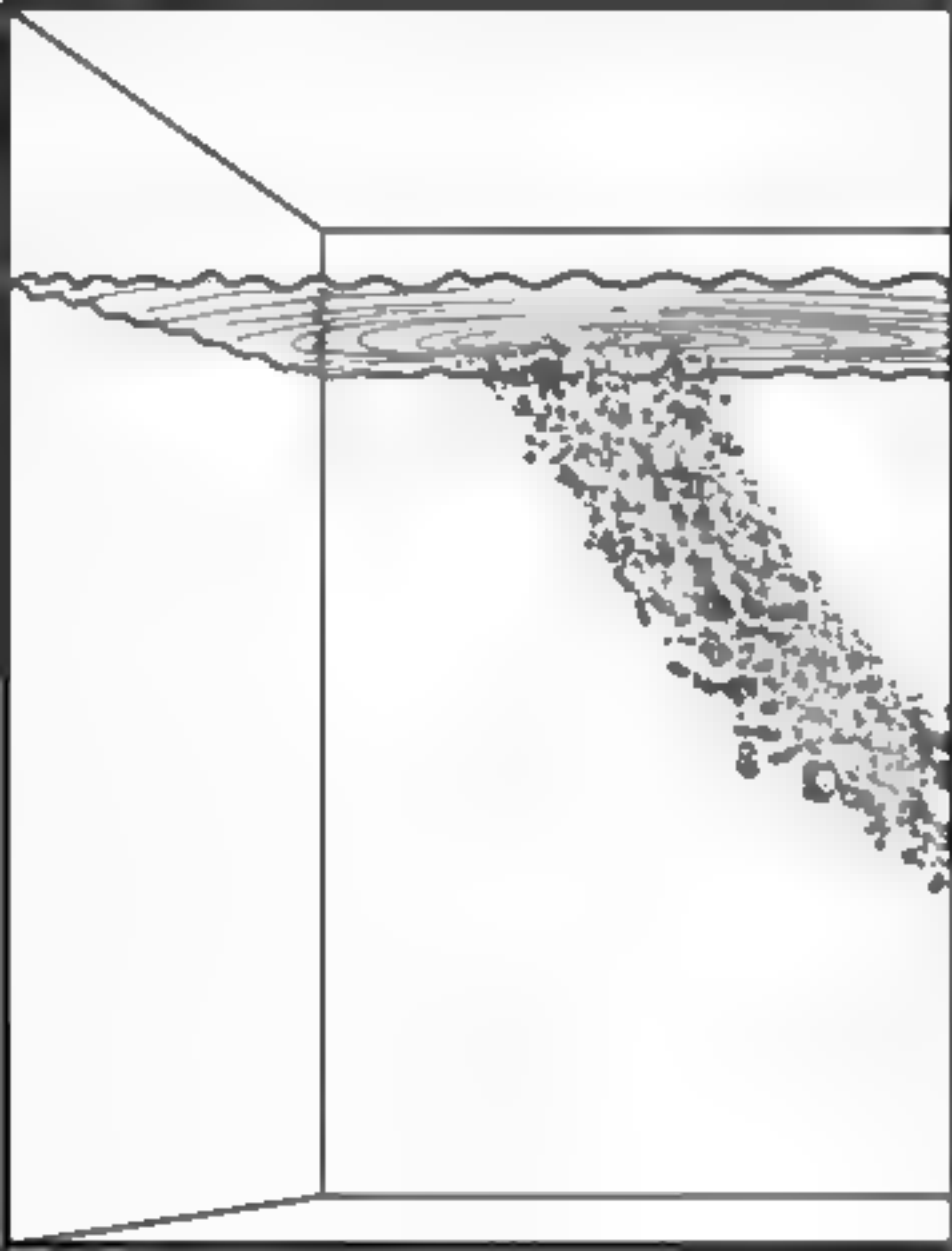




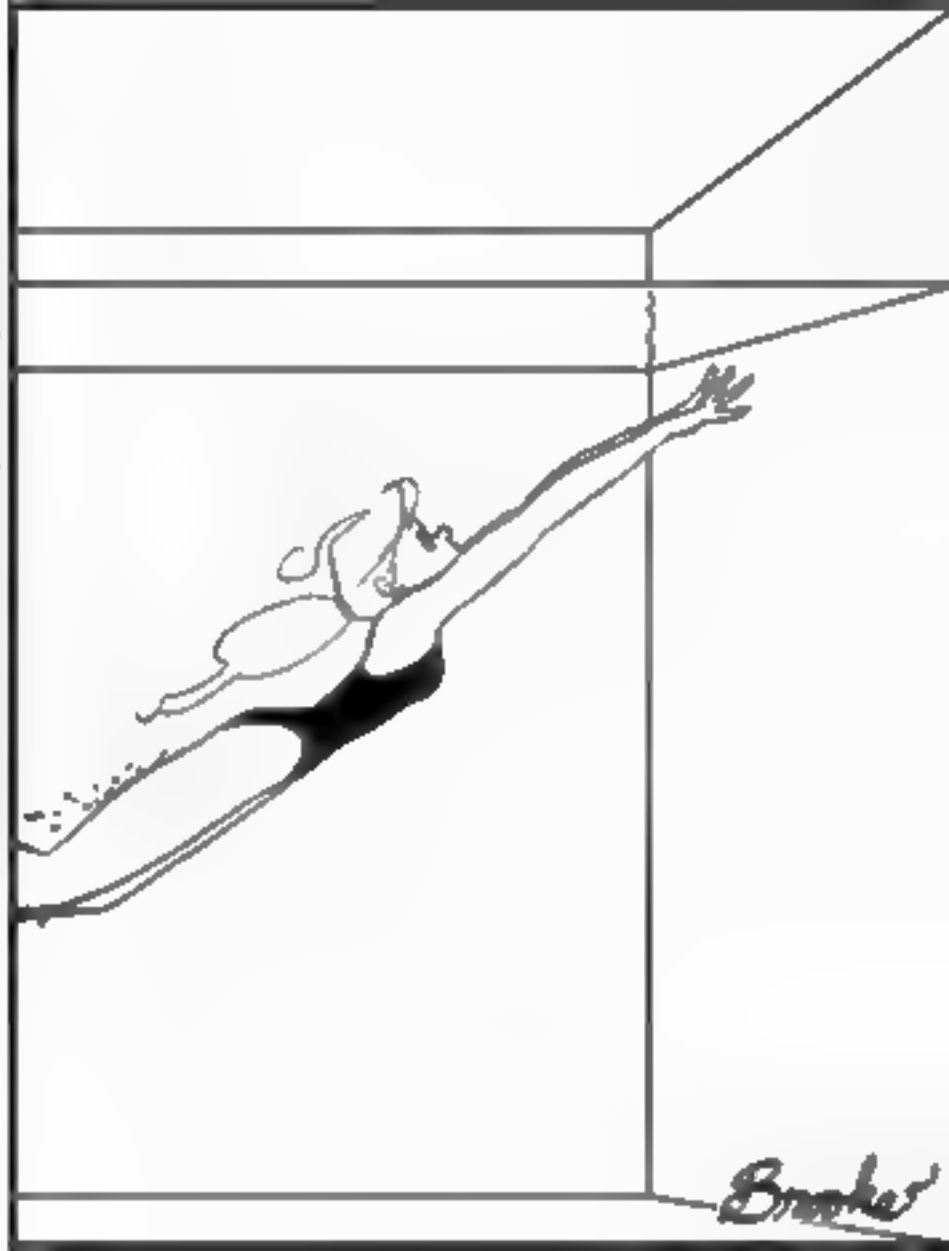
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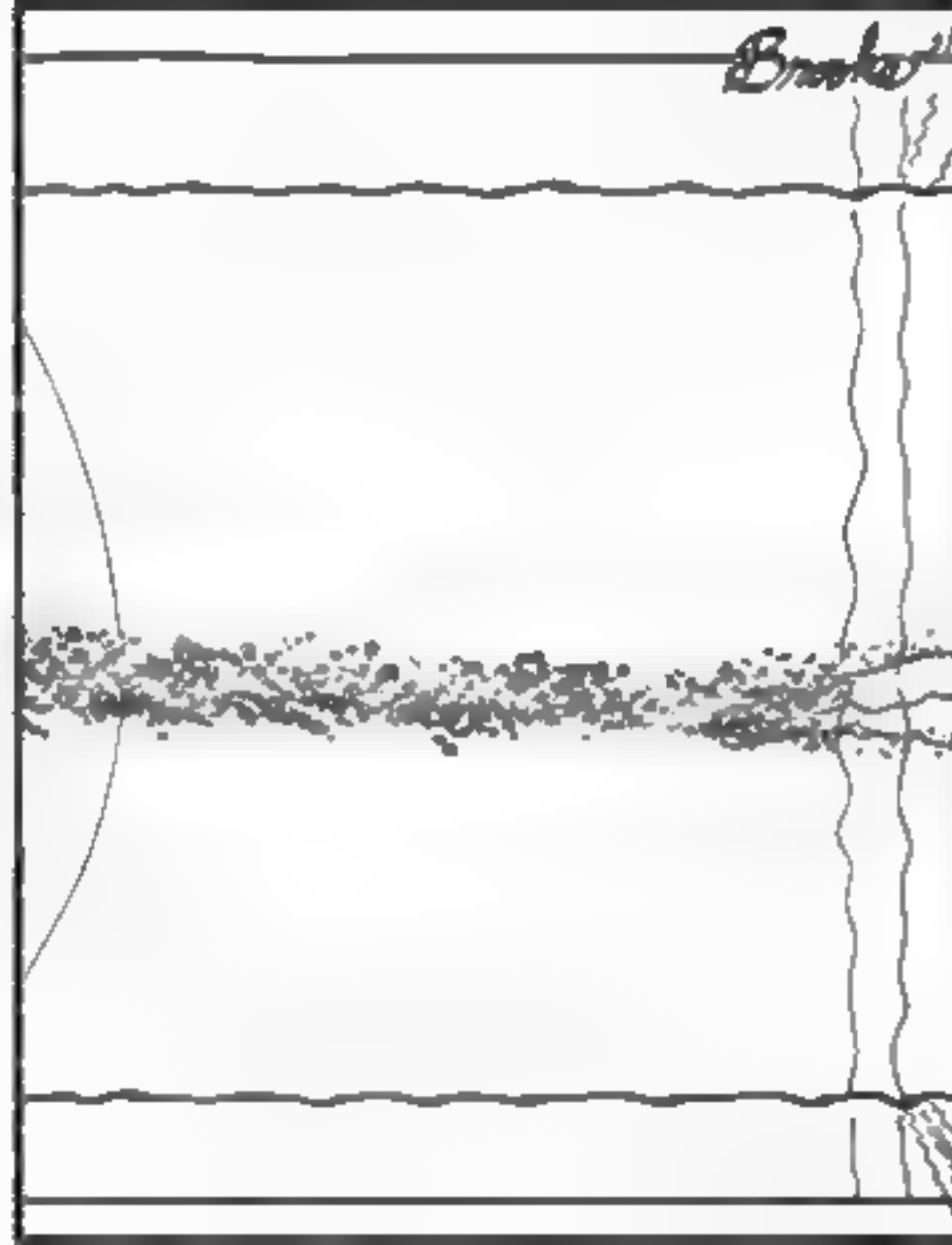
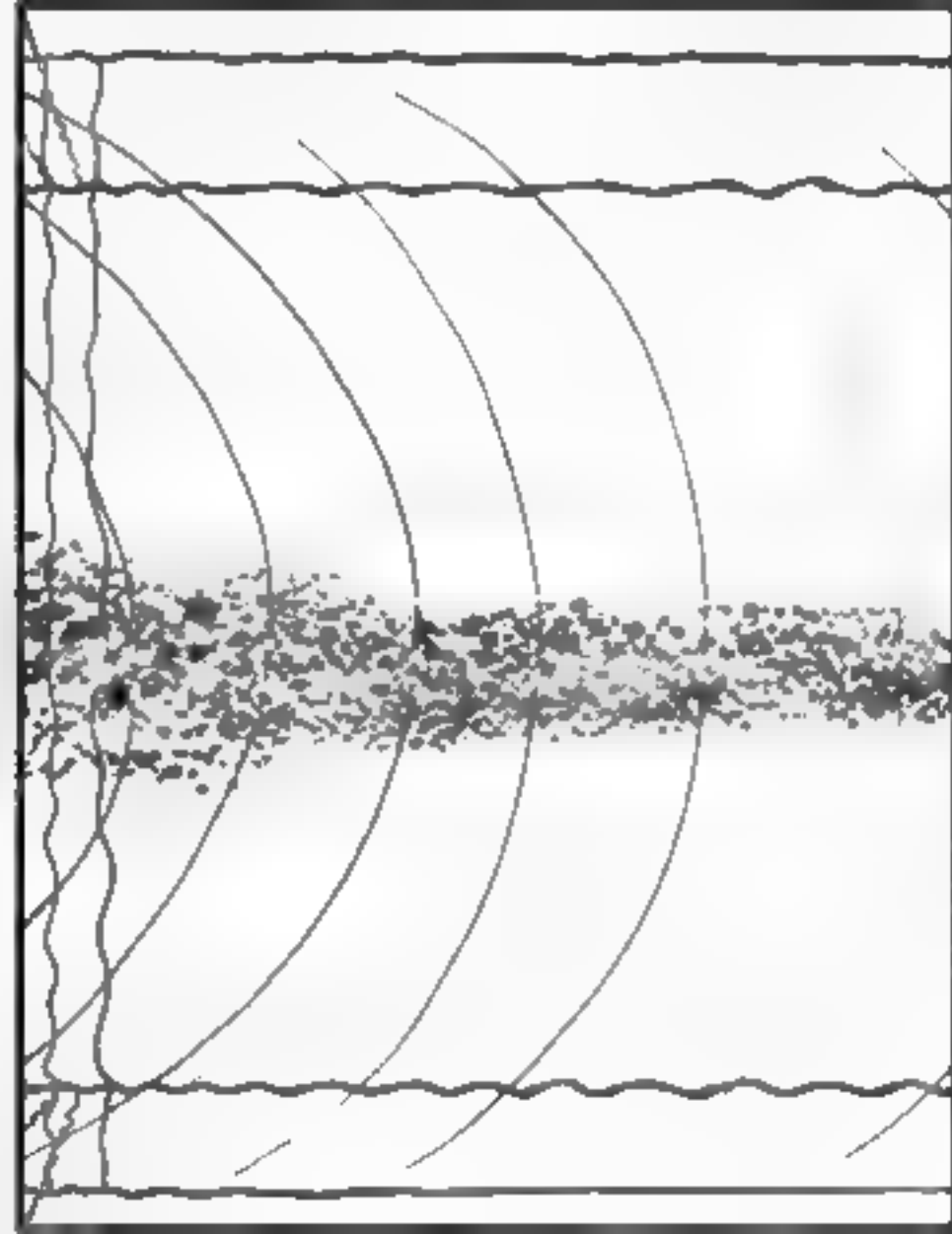
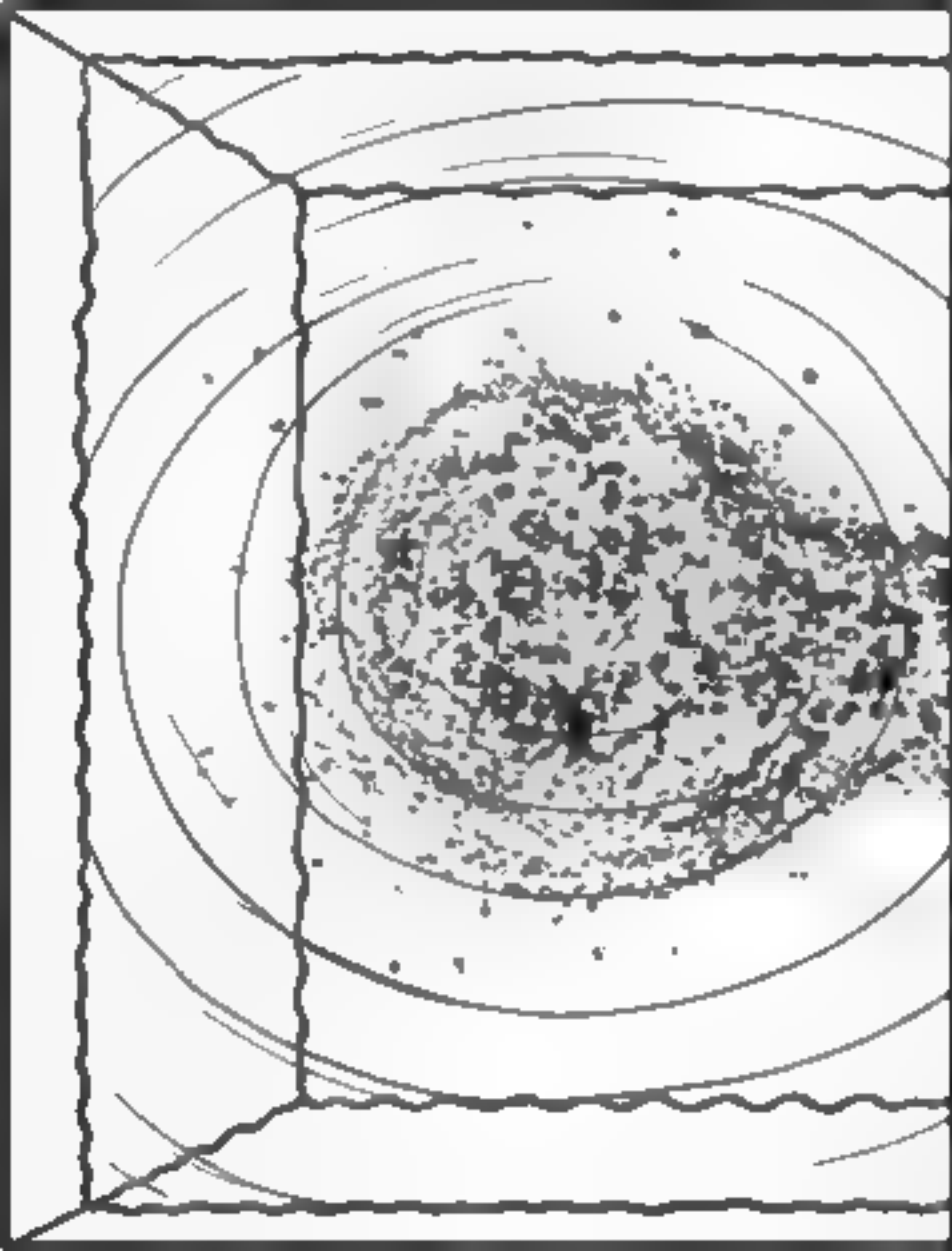




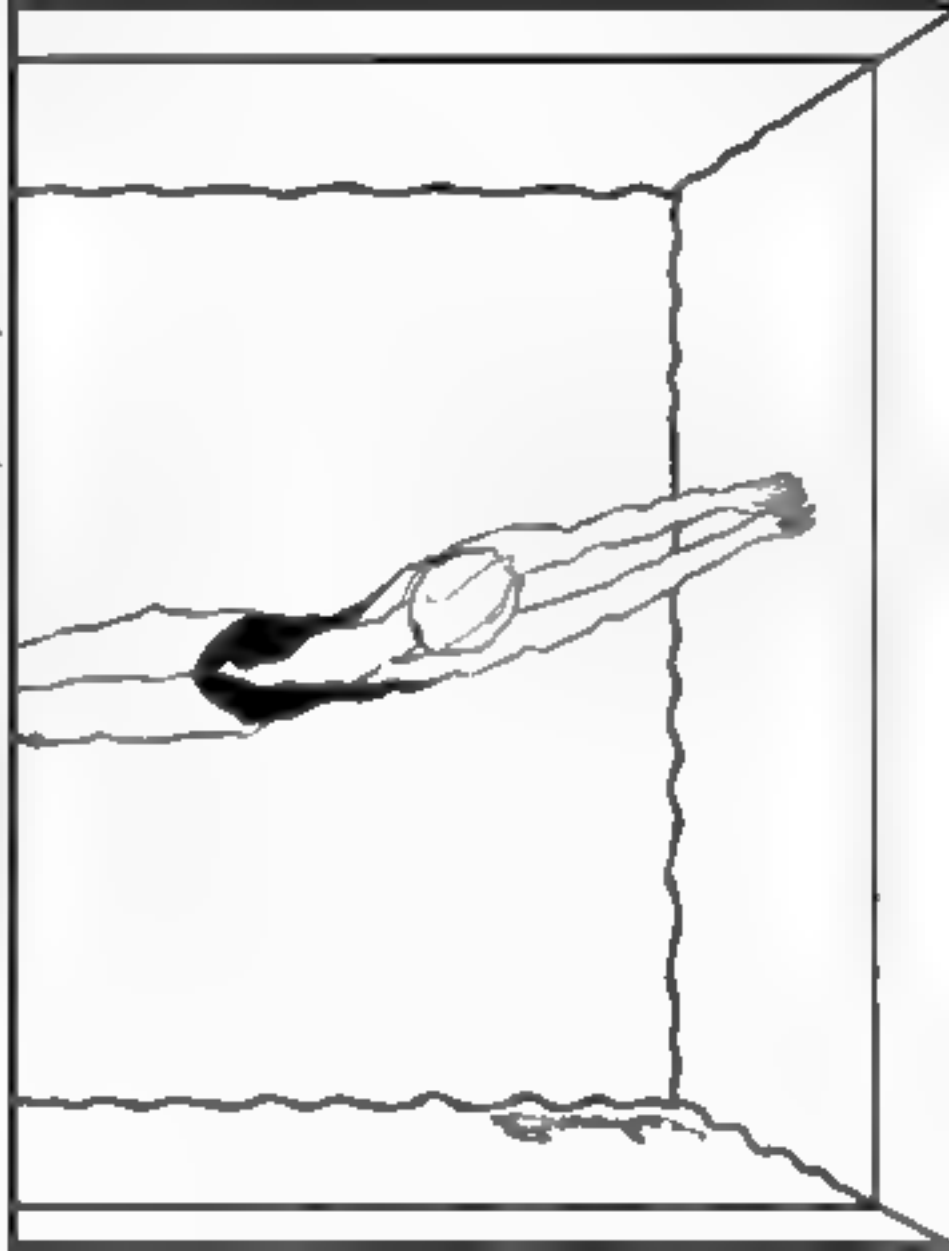
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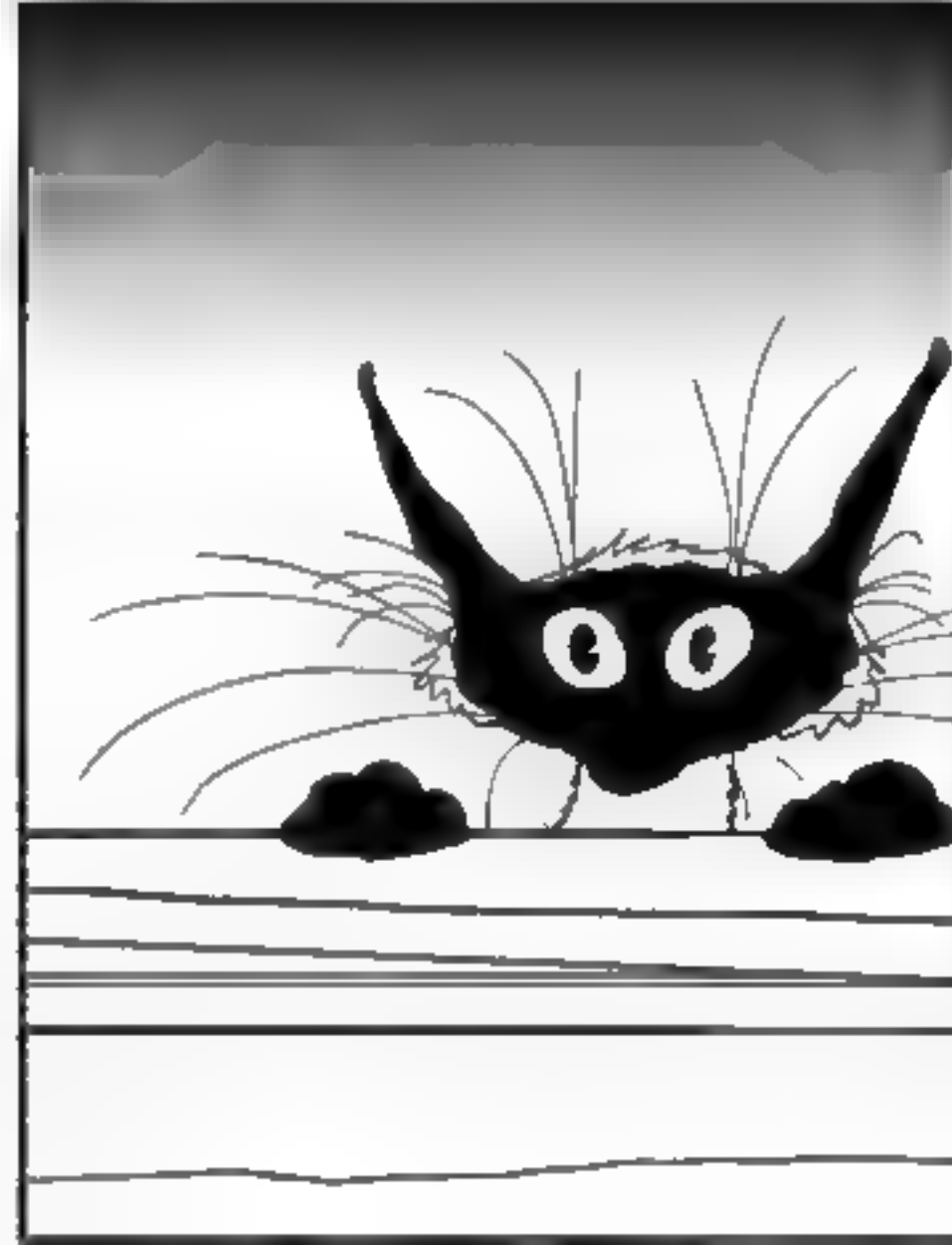
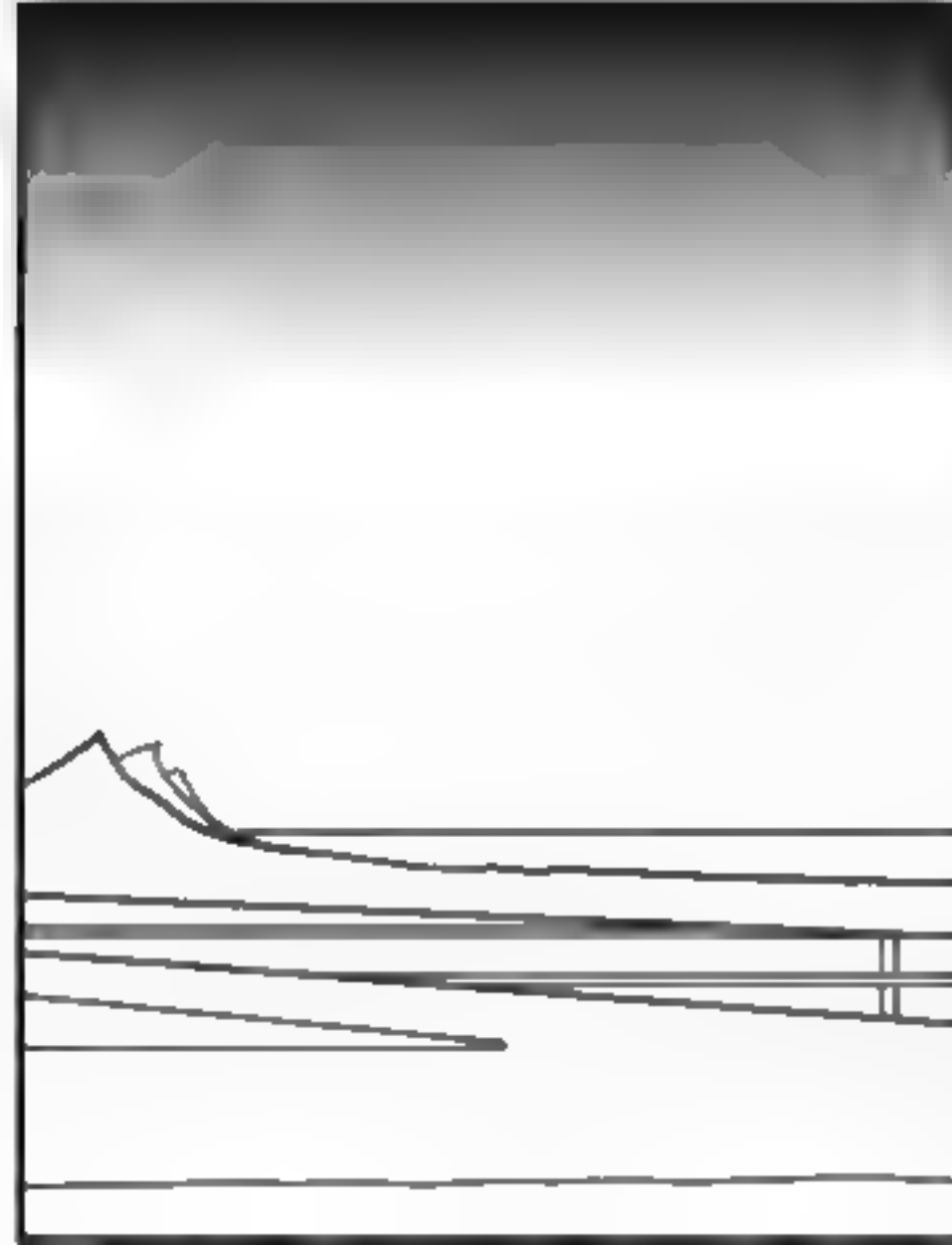
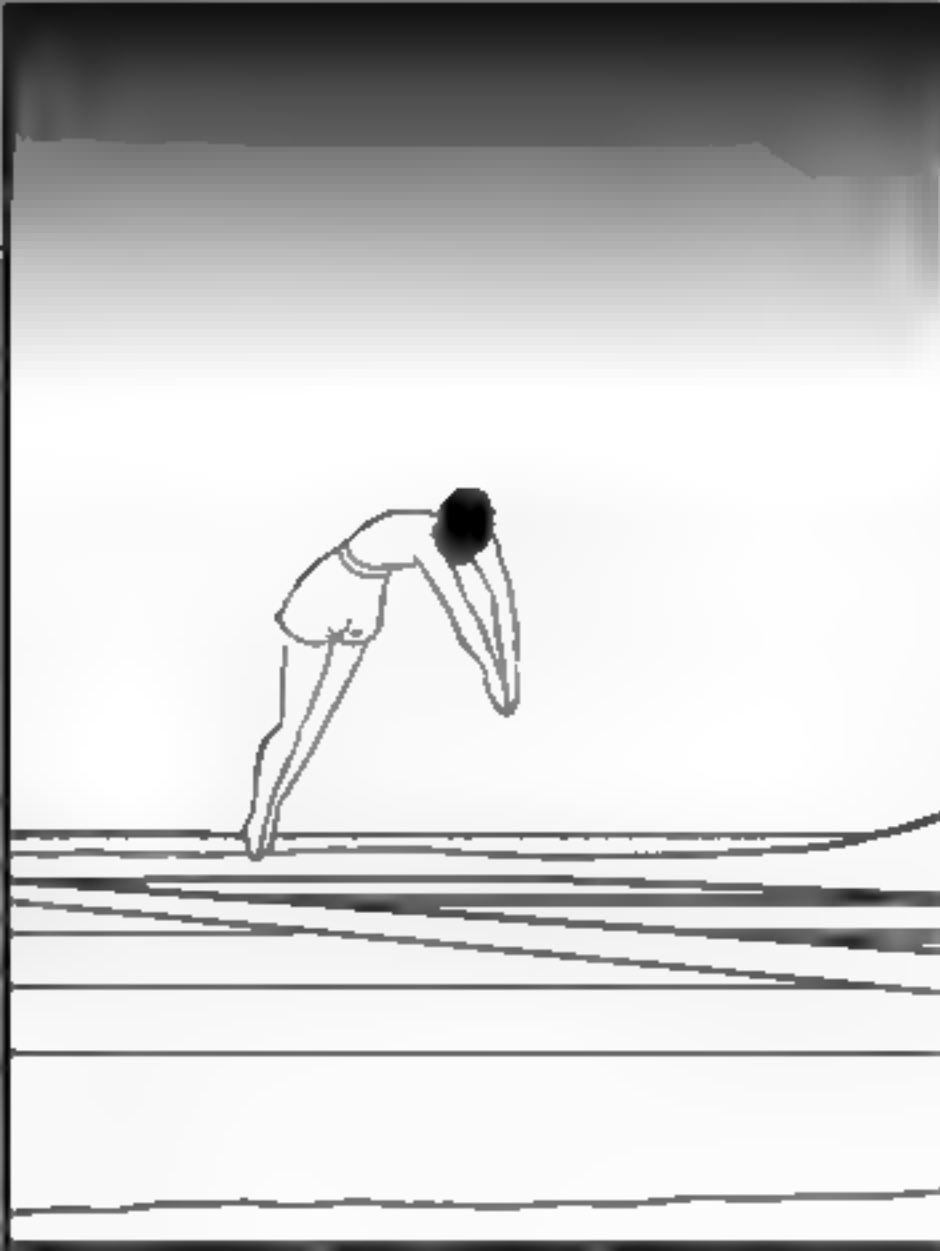


Brooks

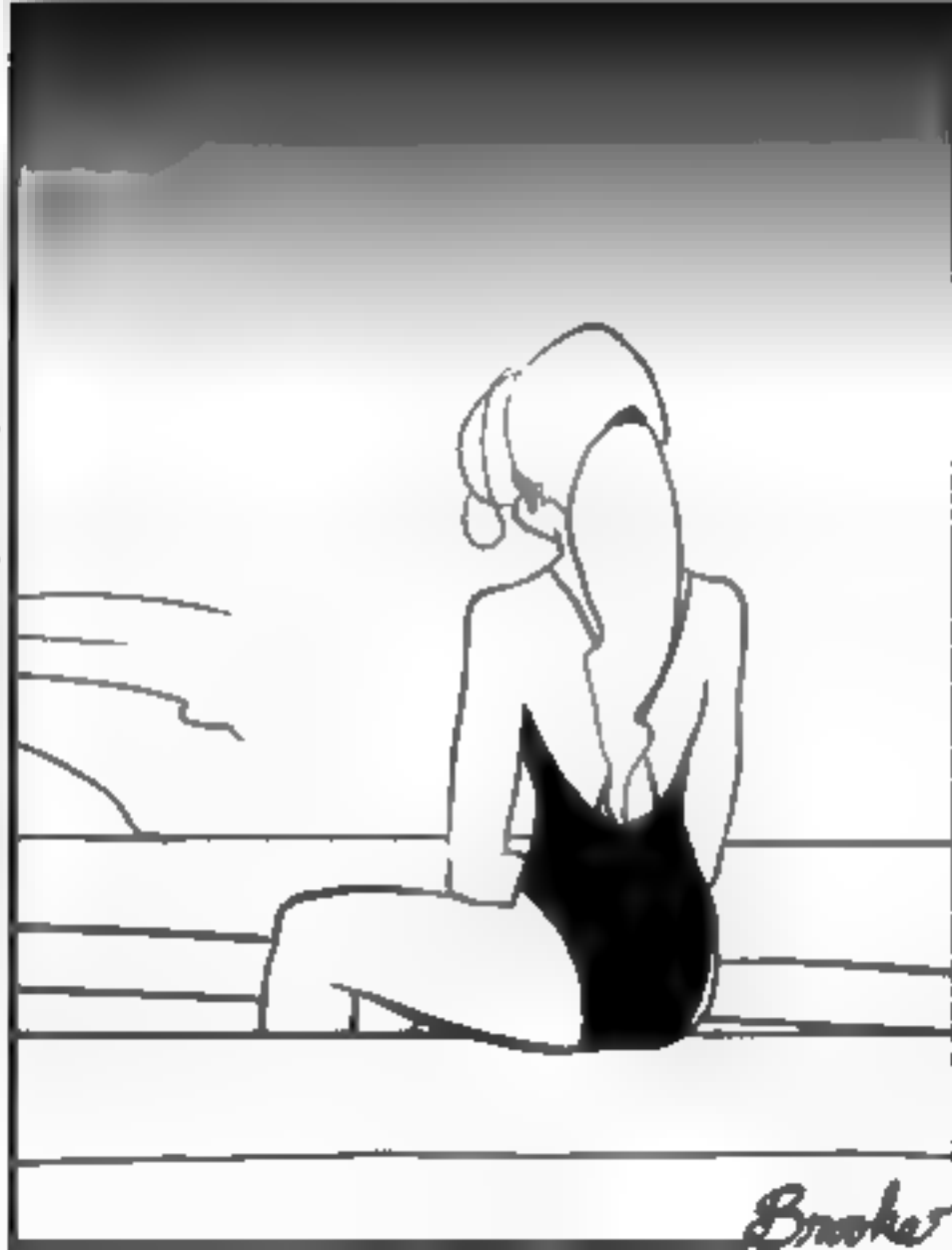


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Brooke







I SPRINKLED HER SHEETS  
WITH LILAC WATER AND  
LEFT A ROSE ON THE  
PILLOW...I THINK  
WE'RE READY  
FOR MARY.



YOU DIDN'T HAVE  
TO GO TO ALL THIS FUSS.  
SHE WAS JUST GOING TO  
CRASH WITH ME.

THAT'S JUST IT, SWEETS...  
HAVE YOU LOOKED AT YOUR  
ROOM LATELY? IT RESEMBLES  
SOMETHING GENERAL  
SHERMAN WOULD  
HAVE LEFT  
BEHIND ON HIS  
MARCH TO  
THE SEA.



*Brooke*

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IN A MOMENT, I AM GOING  
TO RESEARCH WHAT YOU  
JUST SAID TO ME,  
AND THEN I AM  
GOING TO  
RESENT IT.

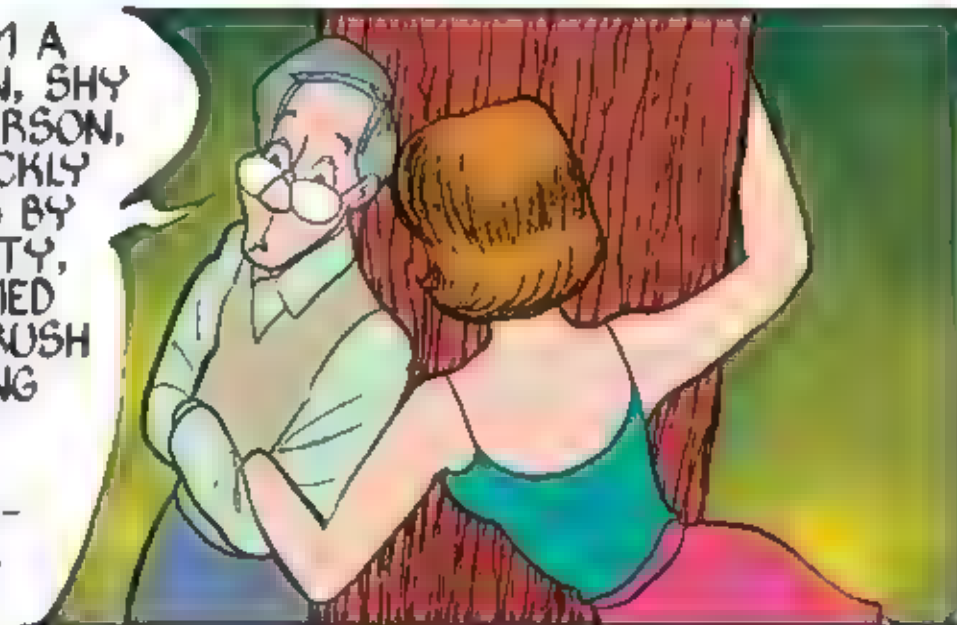


# 9 CHICKWEED LANE

®



WELL, BEING AS I AM A NATURALLY TACITURN, SHY AND INTROVERTED PERSON, AND GIVEN HOW QUICKLY I WAS STRUCK DUMB BY YOUR RADIANT BEAUTY, HOPELESSLY CONSUMED IN A TONGUE-TIED CRUSH THAT LEFT ME STARING AT MY SHOES IN EMBARRASSED ADORATION, THUNDER-STROCK, PARALYZED, ENSLAVED BY LOVE...



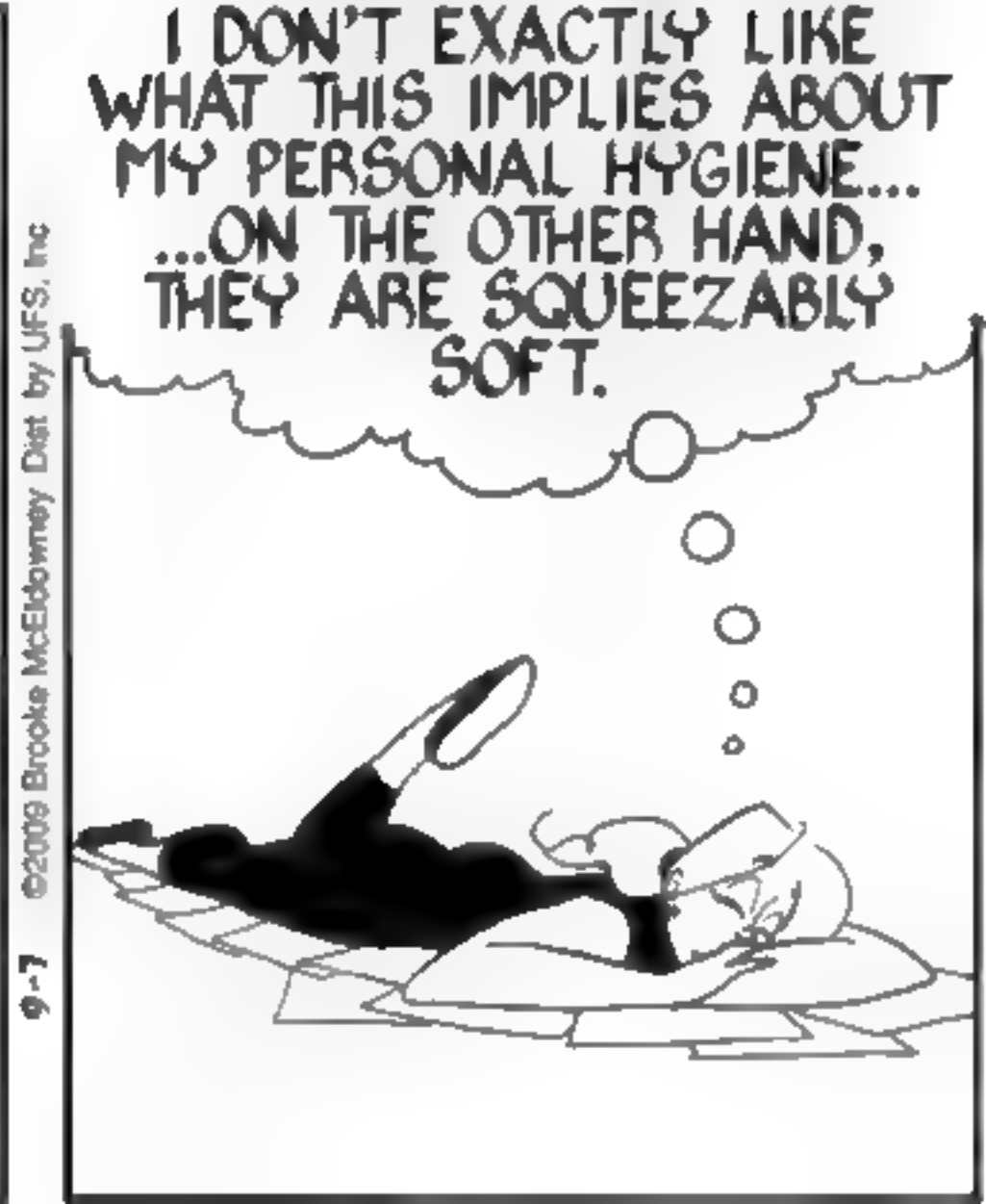
...I BELIEVE THE MOST ROMANTICALLY SUPERCHARGED WORD I MANAGED TO CROAK OUT WAS, "HELLO."



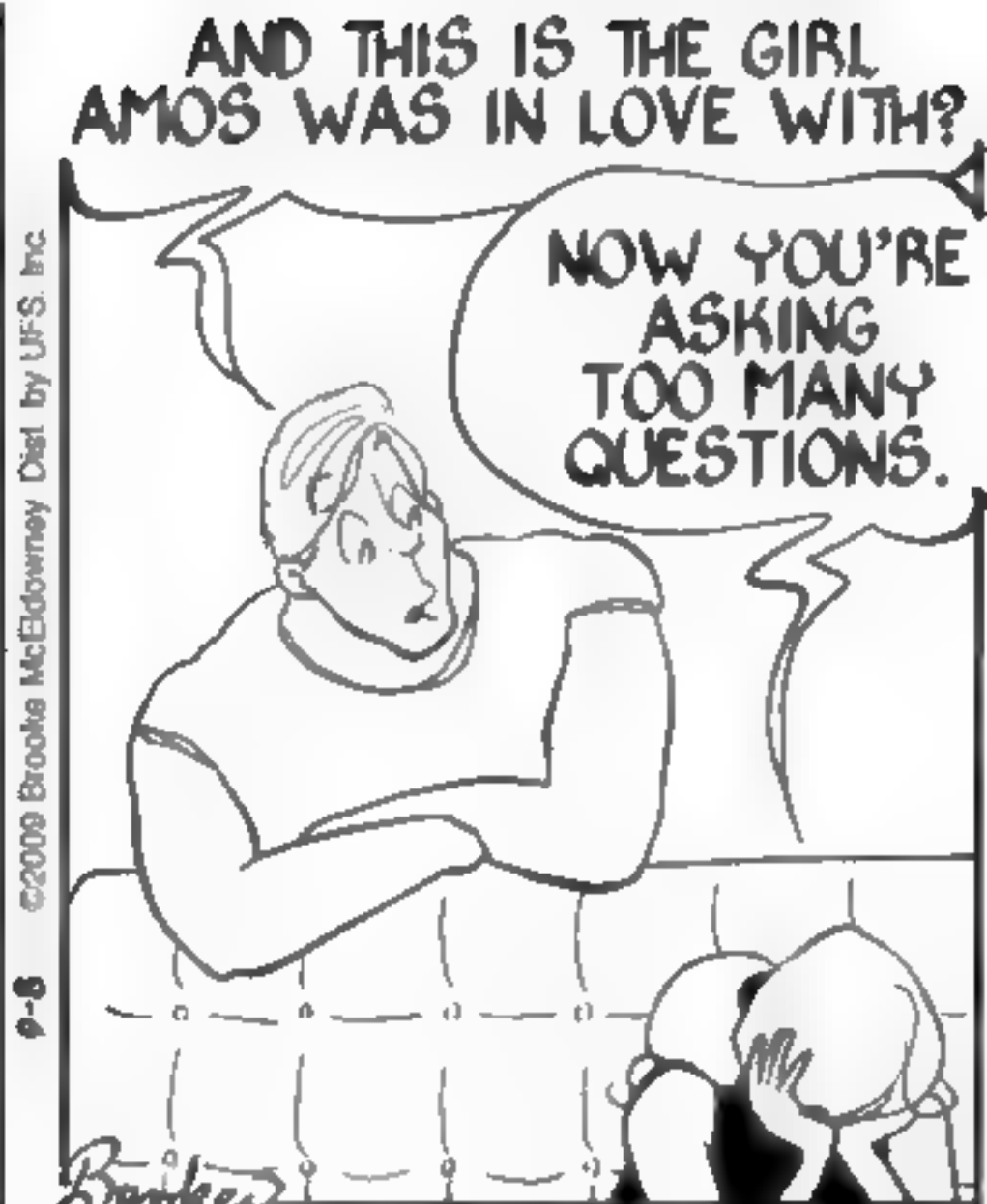
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Brooke







SO ARE YOU GOING TO TELL AMOS ABOUT MARY'S VISIT?

AS IT HAPPENS, HE'S OUT OF TOWN THIS WEEK, PLAYING RECITALS...SO I WON'T HAVE THE CHANCE TO TELL HIM.



WHAT IF HE WERE TO COME BACK INTO TOWN EARLY AND, STANDING RIGHT BEHIND YOU, ACCIDENTALLY HEAR YOUR EVERY WORD? WHAT WOULD YOU SAY THEN?



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WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

TIMING THIS KISS. IT PROMISES TO BE PROLONGED AND HIGHLY IMPROVISATORY.





I'M GOING TO HAVE TO  
TELL HIM. THERE'S NO WAY  
AROUND IT.



AMOS...MARY IS COMING  
TO VISIT...  
...MARY ROSENZWEIG.



THE MAN ALWAYS KNOWS  
JUST THE RIGHT THING  
TO SAY.

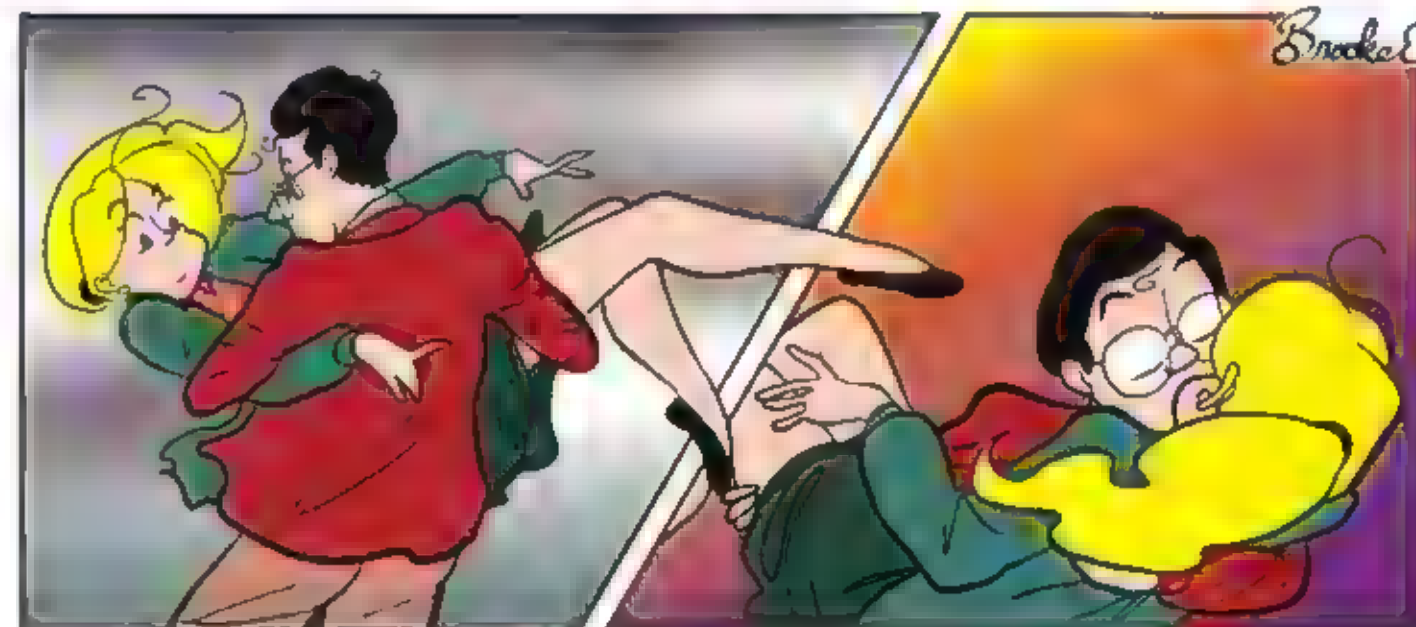




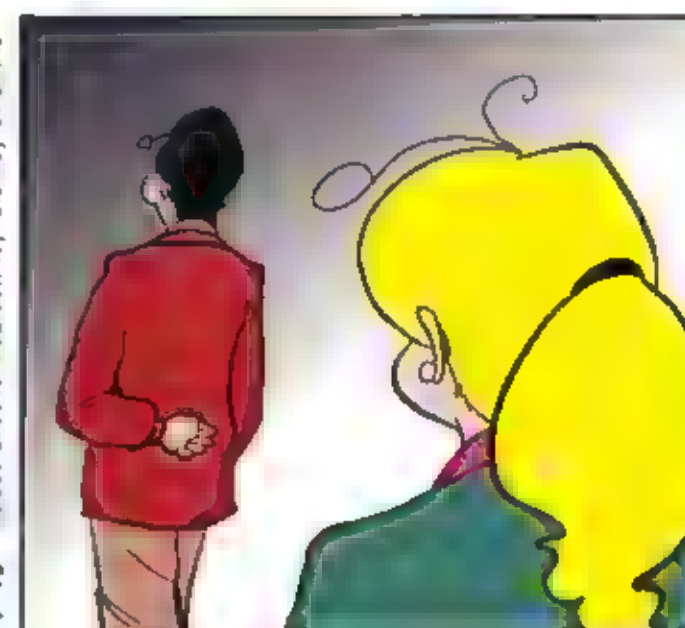


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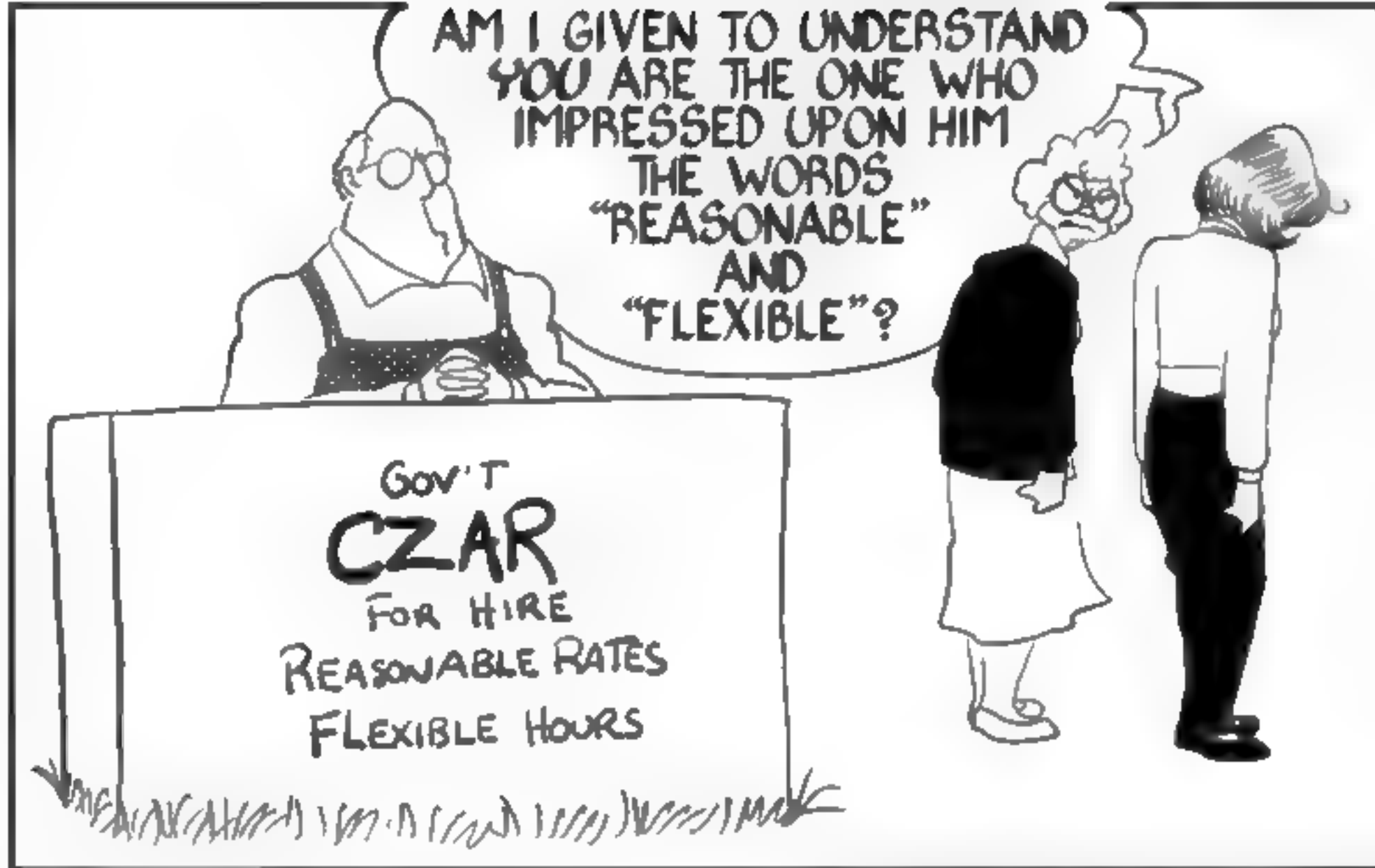
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IN THESE BELEAGUERED TIMES,  
I HAVE BEEN THINKING  
IT'S ABOUT TIME I  
TOOK UP A NEW,  
MORE USEFUL  
LINE OF  
WORK.

JUST  
THINK OF  
SOMETHING  
REASONABLE  
AND  
FLEXIBLE.

Brooke

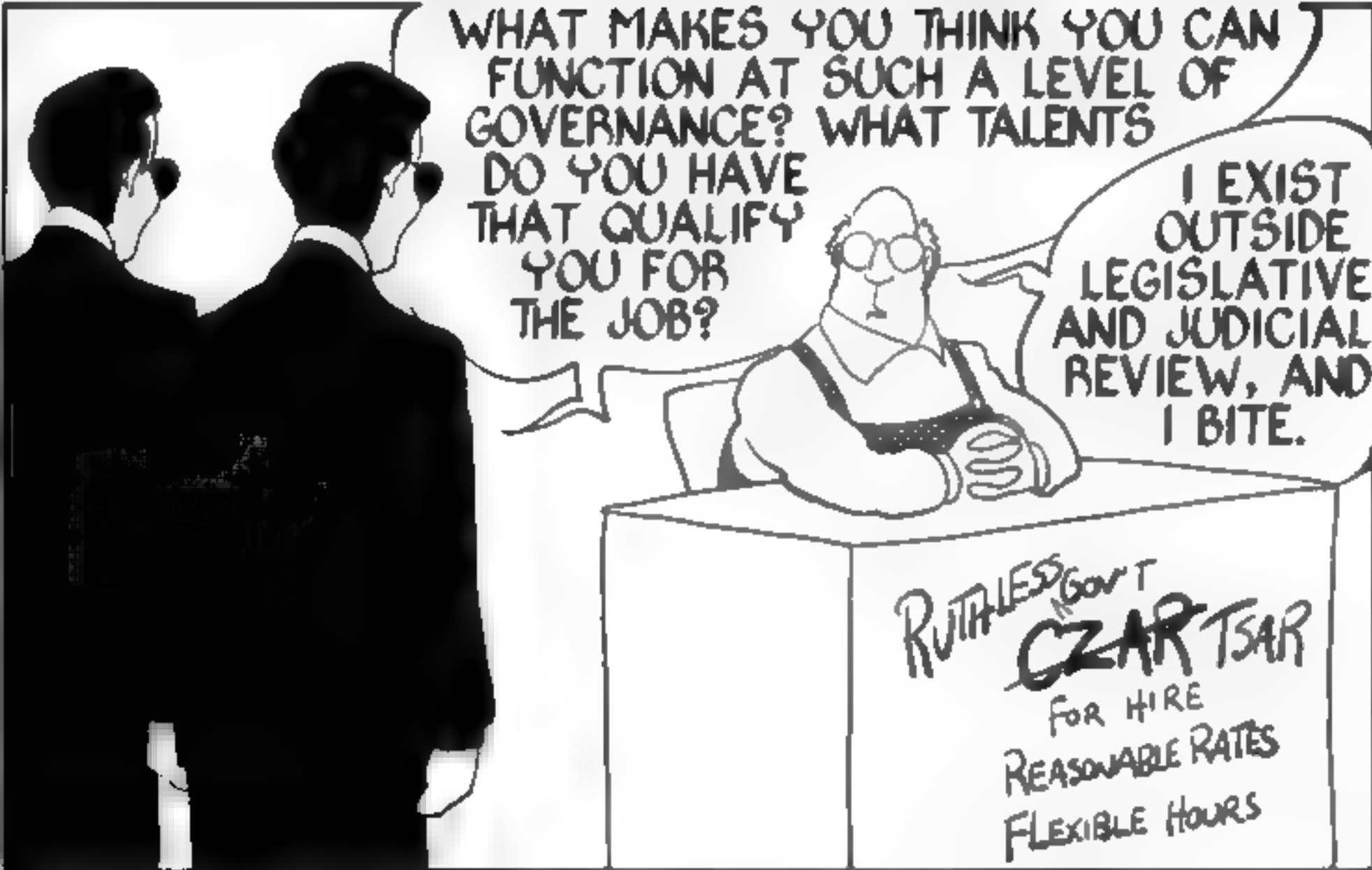












MOTHER, THE SALESGIRL DID NOT DO ANYTHING WRONG. SHE JUST MISCALCULATED YOUR BILL. TRY TO LOOK PLEASANT.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, LOOK PLEASANT?

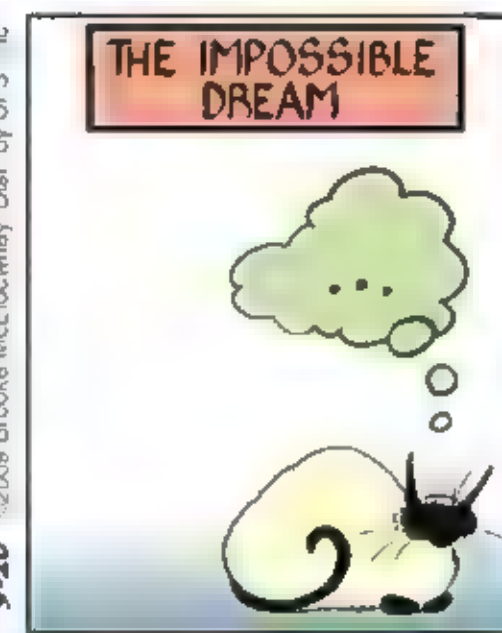
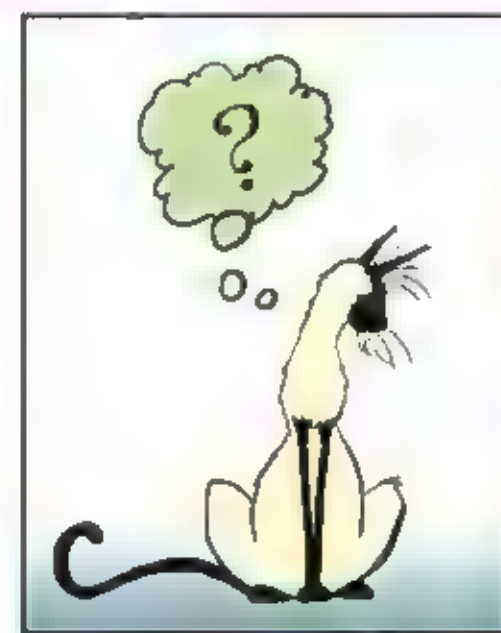
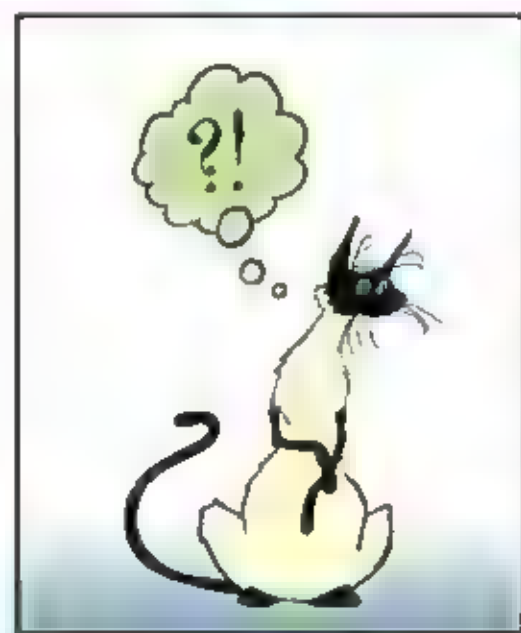
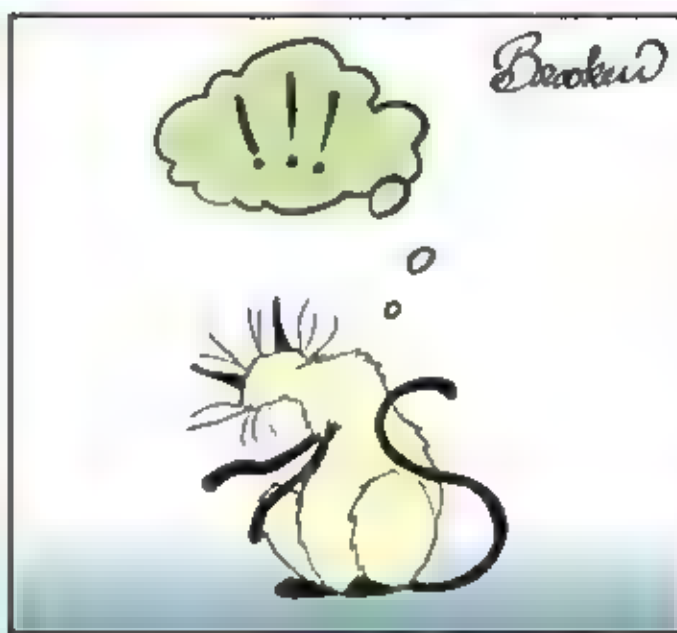
I MEAN, SMILE.

OKAY...NOW SHE'S CRYING, MOTHER.

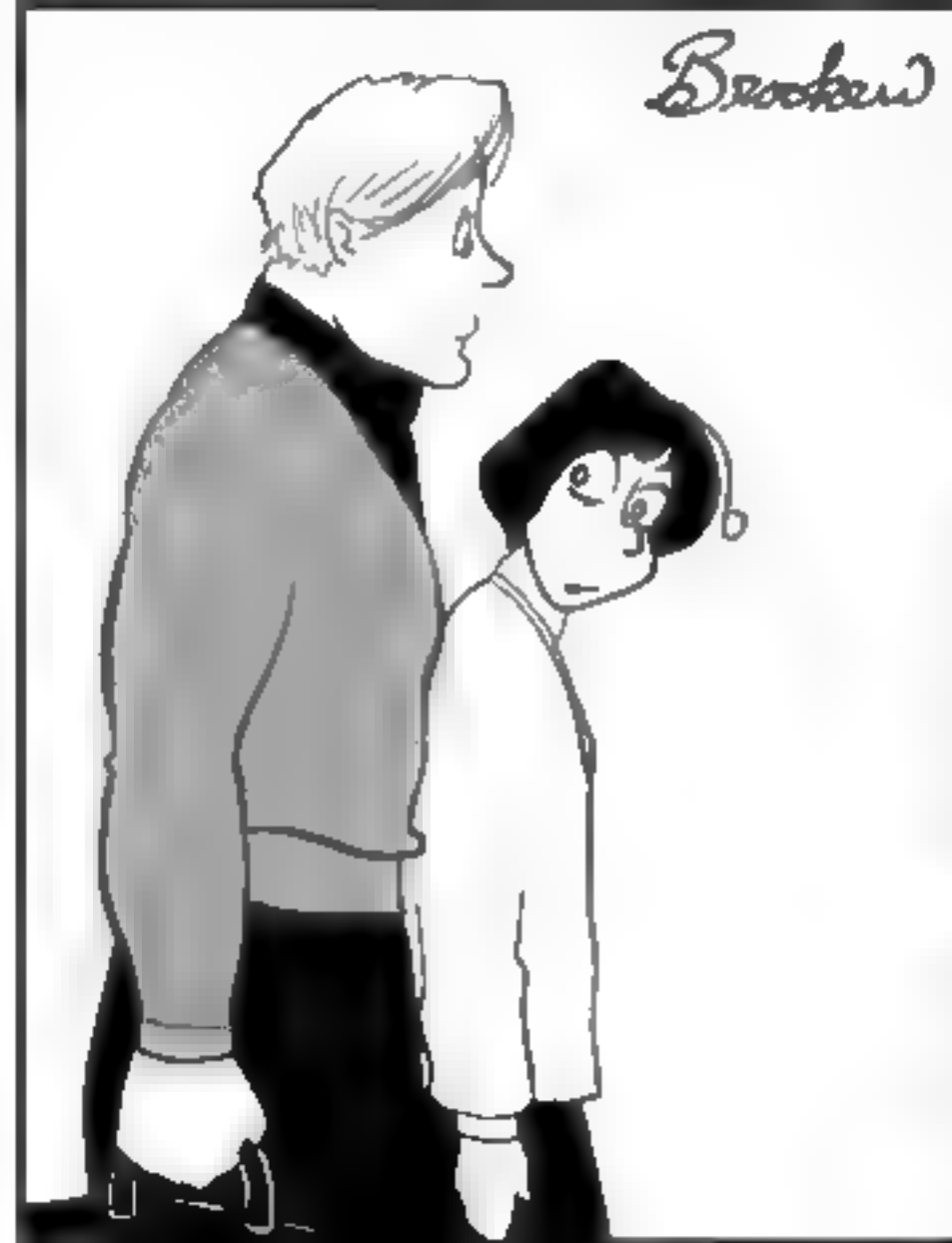
WE DIDN'T TROUNCE HITLER BY LOOKING PLEASANT.

Brooke





THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM



WHEN YOU SAID YOU AND EDDA LIVE TOGETHER, I HAD AN INVOLUNTARY URGE TO SAY "WOW" OUT LOUD. NOW I'M EMBARRASSED.



DON'T BE. AND JUST SO YOU KNOW, OUR RELATIONSHIP IS ENTIRELY PLATONIC.

Ooo! EVEN BETTER.



YOU SAID THAT OUT LOUD.

SOMEHOW I FEEL LIBERATED.

THEN YOU'RE GOING TO LOVE HEARING THIS NEXT BIT...



I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT  
WE GOT OUT OF  
TOUCH. I GOT  
BUSY, AND  
I'M SURE  
EDDA GOT  
BUSY...

OH,  
EDDA'S  
MIDDLE NAME  
WAS BUSY. YOU  
REMEMBER AMOS  
I SUPPOSE...



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AMOS?  
...HE  
WENT TO  
JUILLIARD,  
DIDN'T HE?  
DO THEY  
KEEP IN  
TOUCH?

"TOUCH" IS  
THE KEY  
WORD.  
SIT  
TIGHT  
AND  
I'LL  
CATCH  
YOU  
UP.



DVD's AND POPCORN?

LET'S JUMP RIGHT  
TO THE AERIAL NEWS  
FOOTAGE FROM A  
TOURIST BALLOON  
IN BRUSSELS...

Brooke





YOU SHOWED  
HER THOSE  
DVD'S!?

SHE JUST SAW  
YOU AND AMOS AS  
THE WHOLE WORLD  
SAW YOU...  
AS MUSICIANS,  
FRIENDS AND  
LOVERS.

BUT...

CORRECT ME IF  
I'M WRONG...  
...BUT WASN'T  
AMOS  
ENAMORED  
OF  
MARY  
AT  
ONE  
TIME?

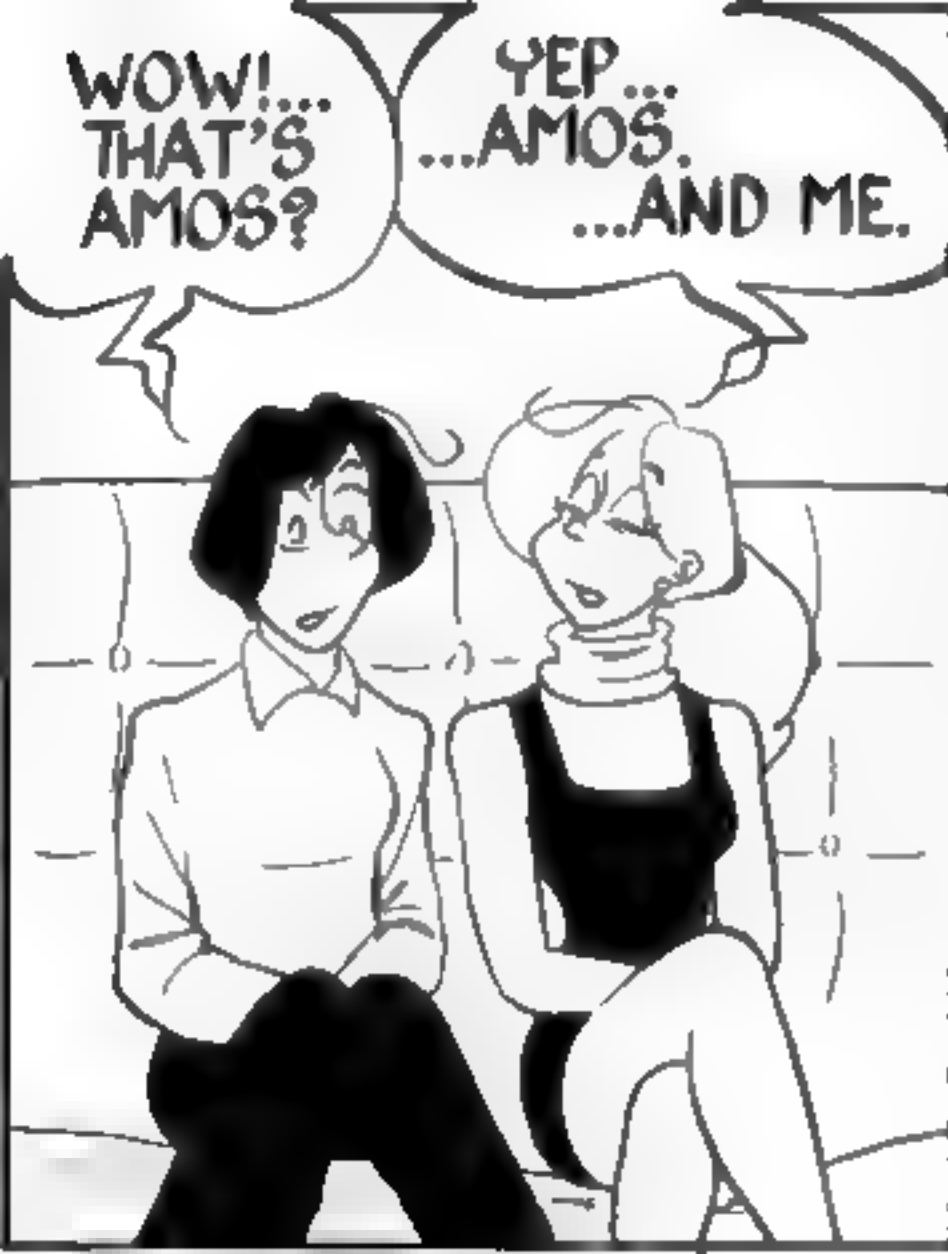
Brooke



SO, MARY, LONG TIME NO  
SEE...YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED  
A BIT...HERE, LET ME RERUN  
THAT BIT OF AMOS AND ME  
AND THE BÖSENDORFER  
GRAND...



...YOU KNOW,  
THROUGH THE  
TELEPHOTO  
LENSES.



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# 9 CHICKWEED LANE

THANK  
HEAVEN  
YOU ARRIVED,  
TAHZ'N  
DAHLING.

I SEEM  
TO HAVE LOST  
A SHIRT BUTTON  
IN THE DETRITUS  
OF THE JUNGLE  
FLOOR.

THANK  
HEAVEN  
FOR JUNGLE  
OPTOMETRY.

THIS IS  
THE PART IN  
WHICH TARZAN  
ESPIES  
THE FIRST TIME  
FOR  
TOP SHE REMOVES HER SOLA  
UNRULY TO REVEAL HER  
CHESTNUT WAVES OF GLISTENING,  
HAIR...

HER FIGURE  
CIRCUMSCRIBED  
BY A TIGHTLY  
FITTING SAFARI  
COSTUME.

AND THIS IS THE PART IN WHICH  
JANE SWIMS FOR THE FIRST TIME  
WITH THE KING OF THE APES,  
TOSSING BACK HER LOVELY  
HEAD TO LAUGH WITH  
CAREFREE  
ABANDON.

AND THIS IS THE PART IN WHICH  
JANE IS CARRIED OFF BY  
TARZAN AND,  
THERE IN HIS  
TREETOP  
SANCTUM,  
SHE...  
EARN'S  
HIS  
TRUST.

BEARING  
IN MIND  
TARZAN'S  
LITTLE  
TOUCH OF  
BURSITIS?

AND  
THIS IS  
THE PART  
IN WHICH  
TARZAN  
LEARN'S THAT JANE  
WANTS TO BE A  
TREETOP APES  
GOING TO SHE  
BE TO HAVE  
ON FLEXIBLE  
GROUND.





OH, LORD...  
...HERE COMES  
AMOS. NOW I  
HAVE TO  
RE-INTRODUCE  
HIM TO MARY...  
...THE GIRL WHO  
USED TO  
ENTHRALL HIS  
EVERY WAKING  
THOUGHT.  
OH WELL...  
...THERE'S  
NOTHING I CAN  
DO NOW BUT  
SAY...

AMOS!...  
LOOK  
WHO'S  
HERE!  
IT'S...



...PERFECT.  
JUST  
PERFECT.



Brooke





I'M SURPRISED YOU HAVEN'T ASKED IF AMOS AND I ARE GETTING MARRIED. EVERYONE ASKS THAT QUESTION.

IT'S A FOREGONE CONCLUSION.

YOU TWO HAVE BEEN MARRIED SINCE SIXTH GRADE.

MARY TOLD ME THAT WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN DESTINED FOR EACH OTHER EVER SINCE SHE KNEW US IN GRADE SCHOOL. SHE SAID I'M YOUR HOME, YOUR ANCHOR, YOUR EVERYTHING.

YEAH, WELL, DUH.

FUNNY...WHEN I SAID, "REALLY?" THAT'S HOW SHE RESPONDED, SHE SAID, "DUH."

YEAH, WELL, AGAIN, DUH.

EXCEPT, WHEN YOU SAY IT, IT SOUNDS SO SEXY. SAY IT AGAIN.

DUH...

I'LL BE IN MY ROOM, AND I'M LOCKING MY DOOR.

IF YOU DIDN'T KNOW ME...IF WE'D NEVER  
MET AND YOU WERE ENCOUNTERING ME  
FOR THE FIRST TIME...

...DO YOU  
THINK  
YOU'D  
FALL  
IN LOVE  
WITH  
ME?



WELL, LET ME PUT  
MY MIND INTO SUCH  
A SCENARIO...  
WE'VE NEVER MET.  
I SIT NEXT TO YOU  
ON A PARK BENCH,  
AND WE BEGIN TO  
DISCUSS, LET US  
SAY, THE WEATHER.

*Brooke*

RIGHT AWAY, I NOTICE YOUR  
EYES ARE CERULEAN, YOUR  
HAIR PICKS UP SUNLIGHT IN  
GLEAMING STRANDS, YOUR  
VOICE HAS THE SOUND OF  
OF A HIGH DOUBLE-REED

WOOD-  
WIND,  
THERE IS  
SWEET-  
NESS AND  
HONESTY  
AND HUMOR  
IN YOUR FACE,  
YOUR MOUTH  
IS NEVER  
FAR FROM  
A LAUGH...



OKAY...I JUST FELL IN  
LOVE AGAIN.

WELL  
YOU  
TOOK  
YOUR  
TIME.



THE WAY YOU DESCRIBE IT,  
IT SOUNDS AS IF YOU FALL  
IN LOVE WITH ME  
ON A REGULAR  
BASIS.

WELL,  
YOU MAKE IT  
ENORMOUSLY  
EASY...  
...HERE,  
WATCH.



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*Brooke*

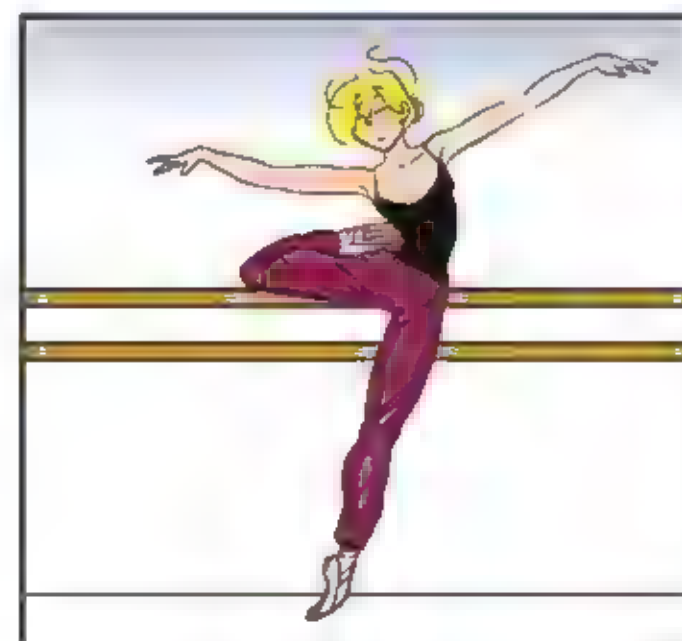
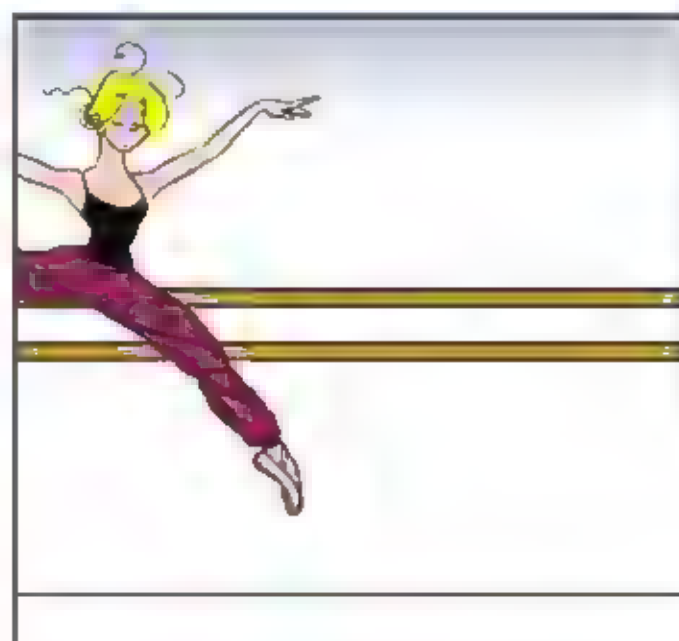
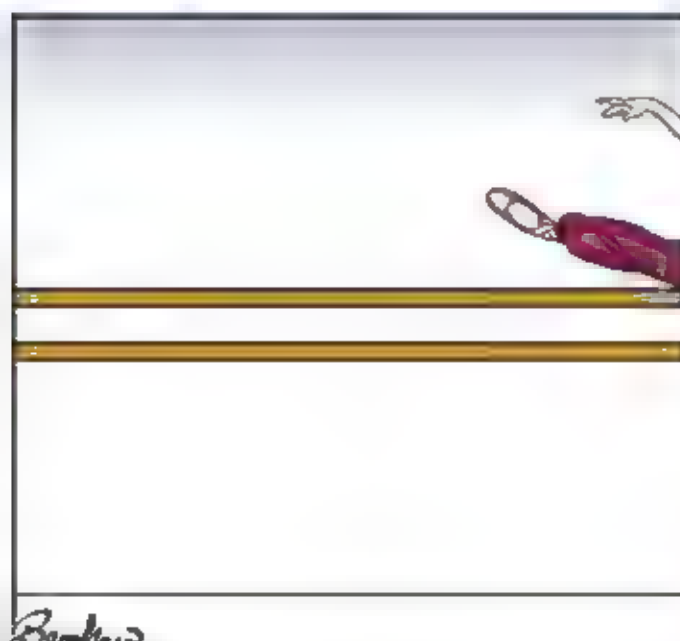
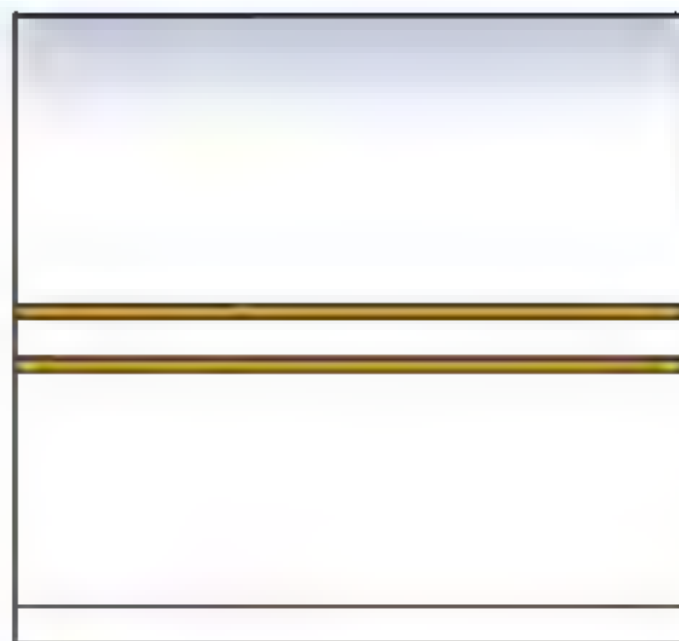
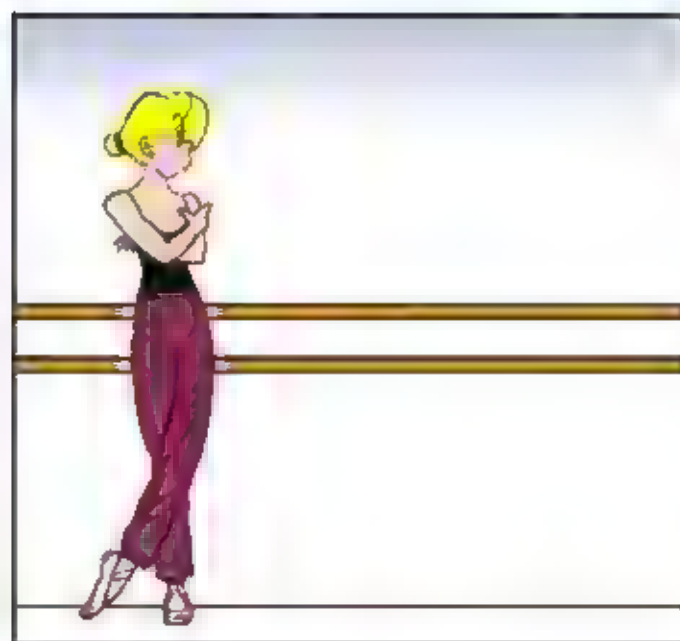
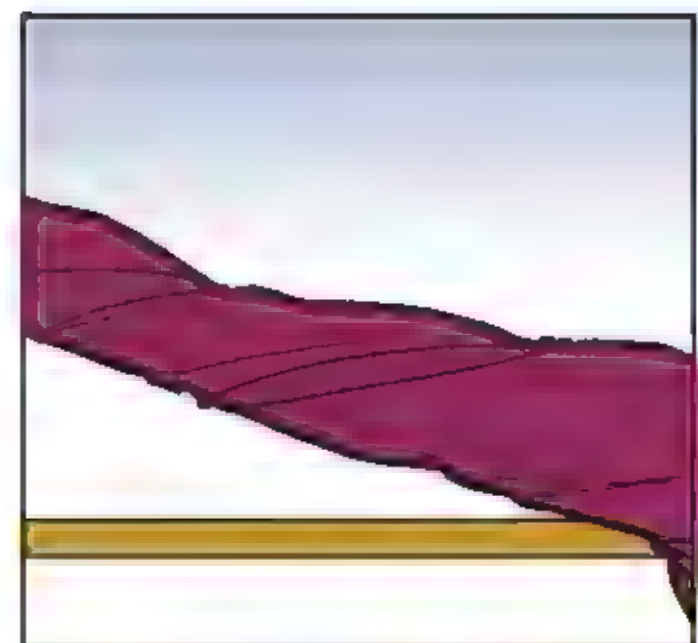


THERE  
I JUST  
FELL IN LOVE  
WITH YOU  
THREE  
TIMES.



YOU'RE  
MAKING ME  
BLUSH.

FOUR  
AND  
COUNTING...







*Broken*



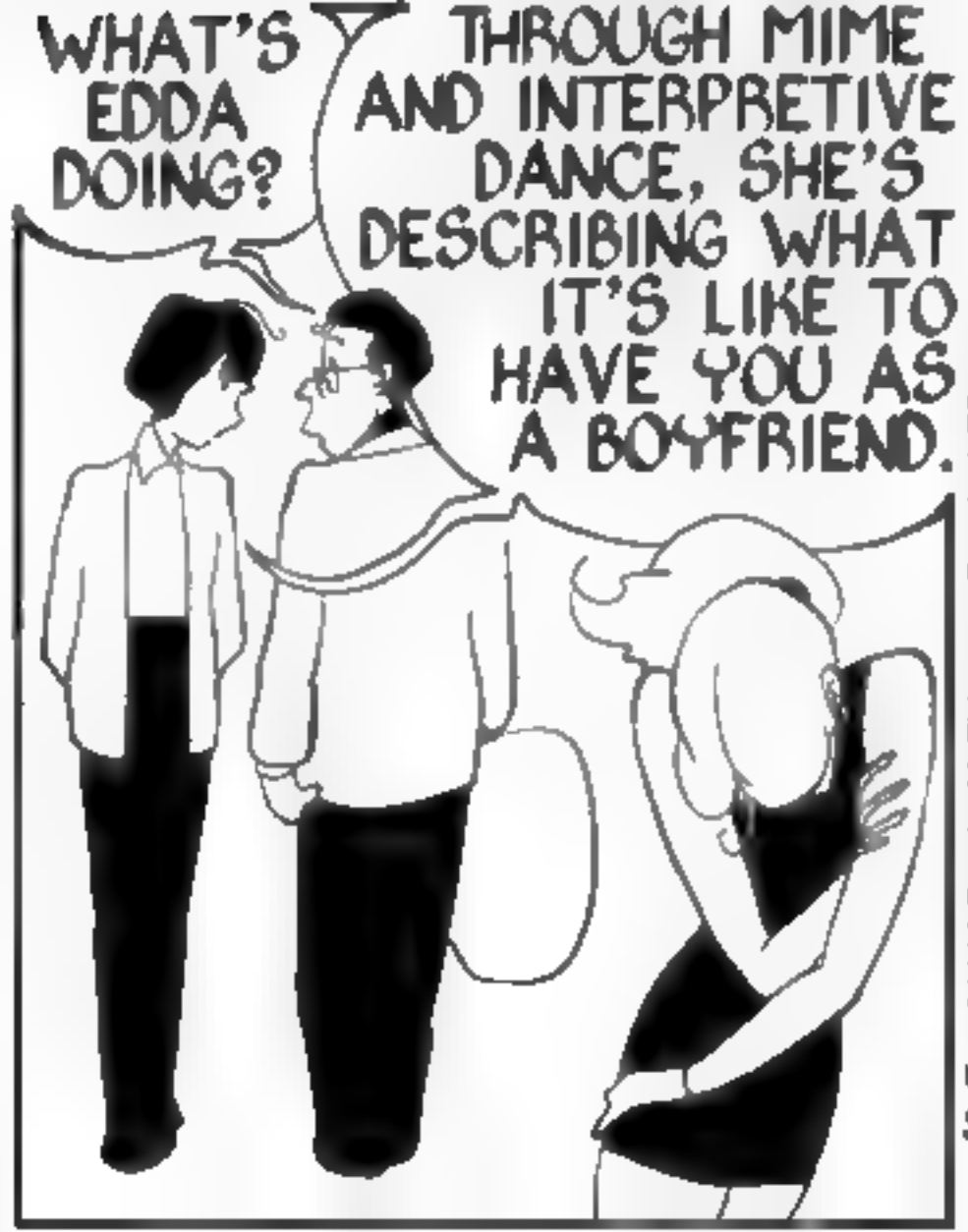
THE WAY YOU  
MIME IT, AMOS IS  
ONE ASTOUNDING  
BOYFRIEND.

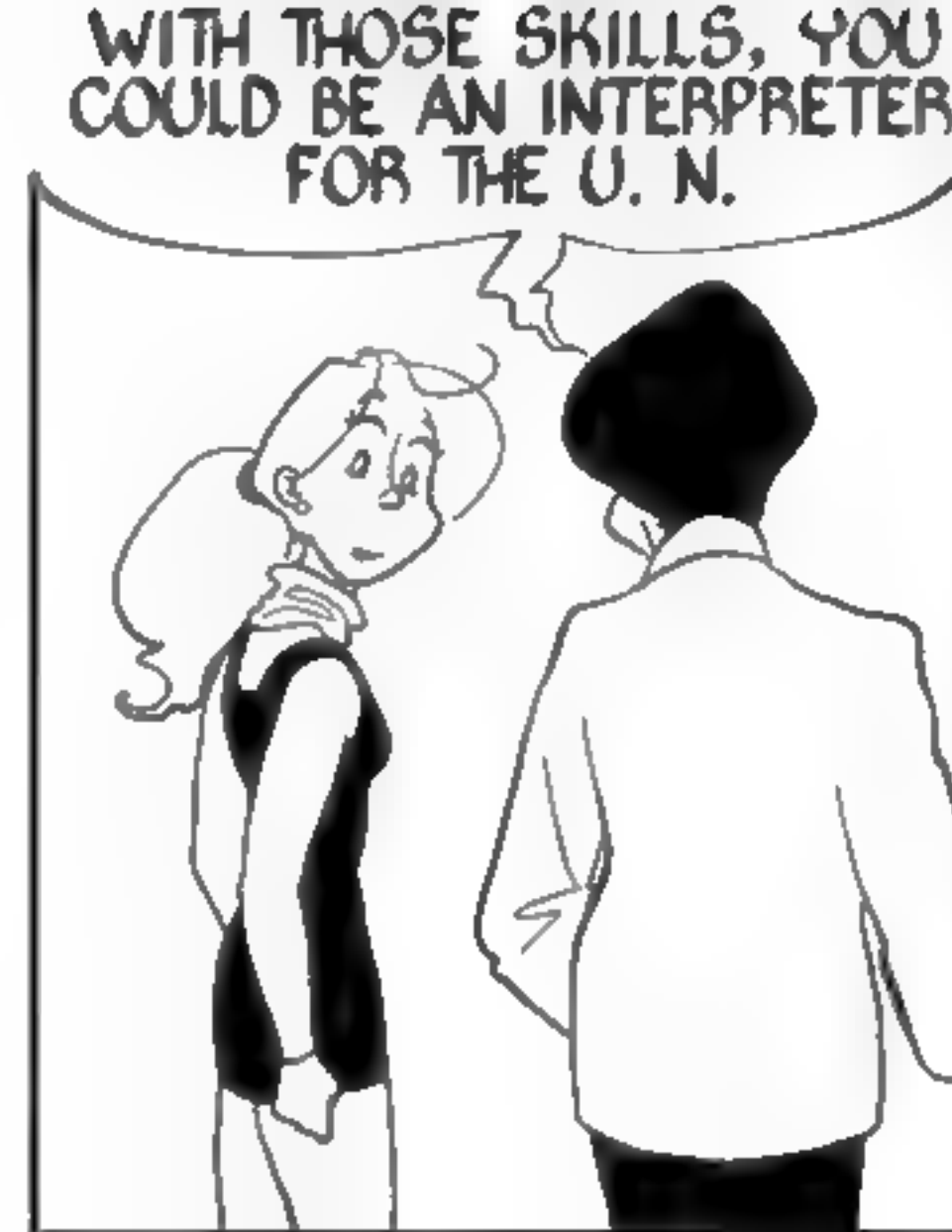
AND  
I'M  
ONLY  
GETTING  
STARTED.

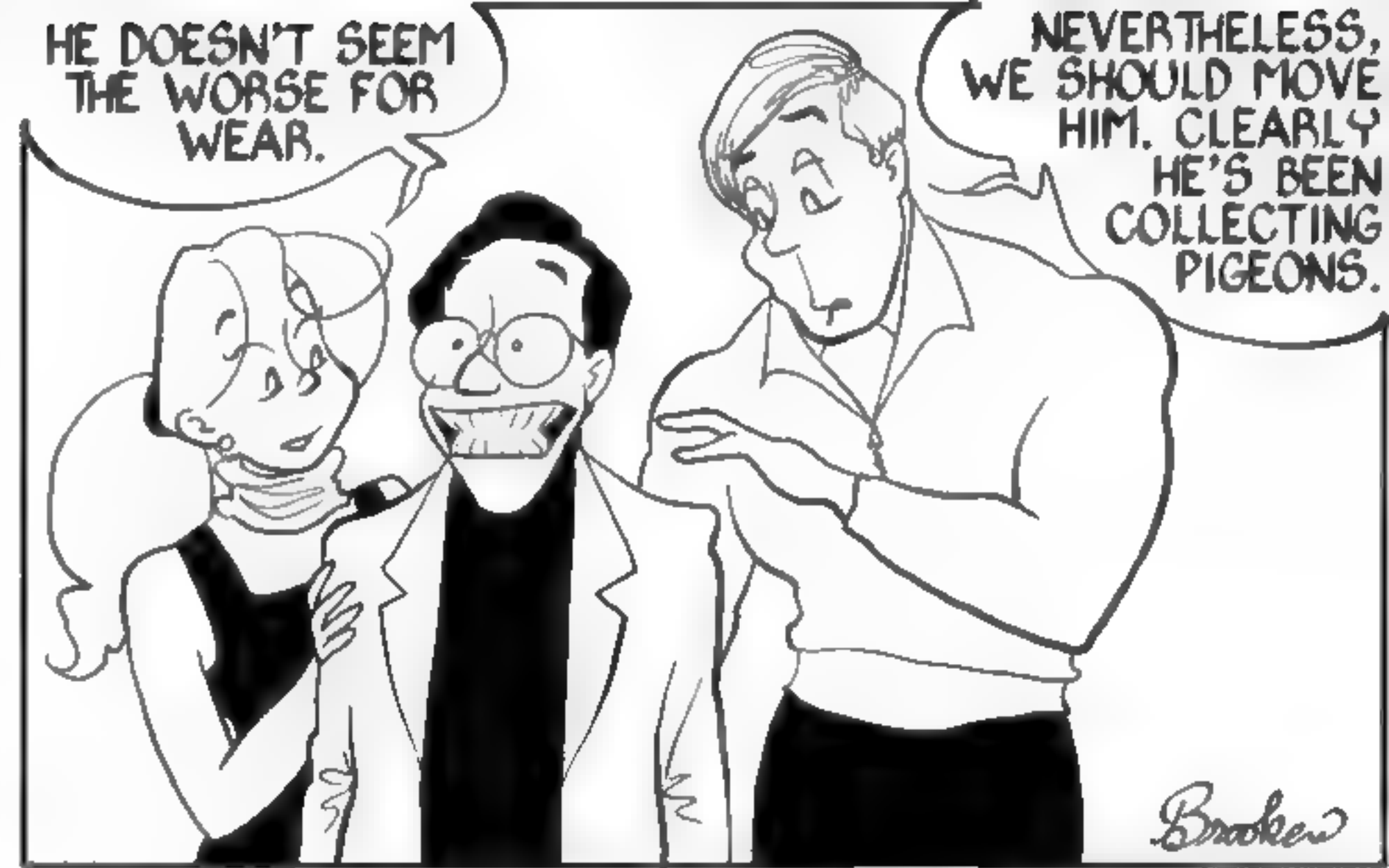


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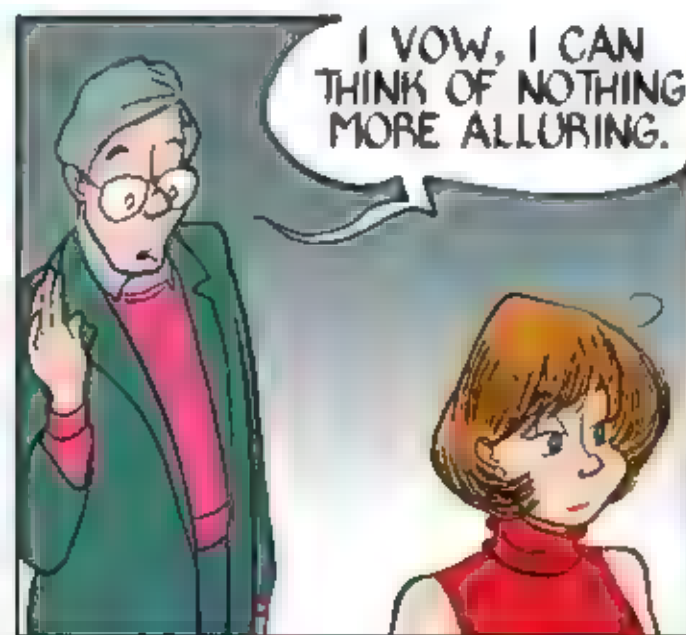
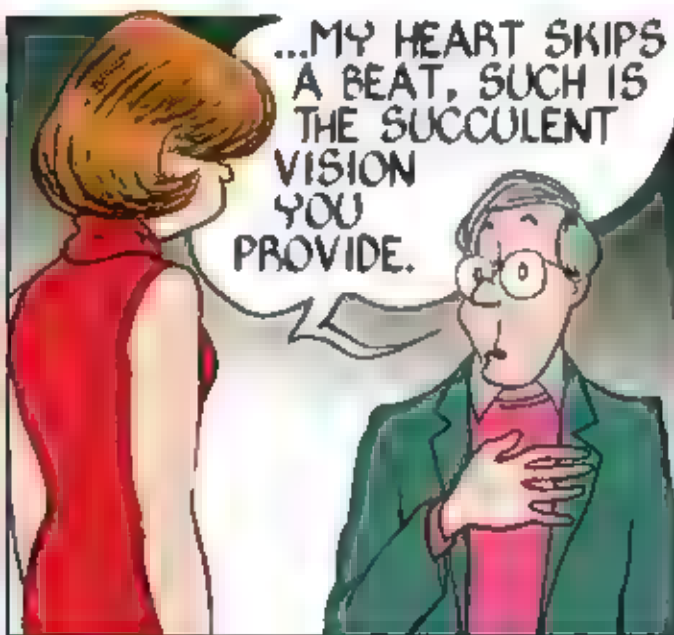
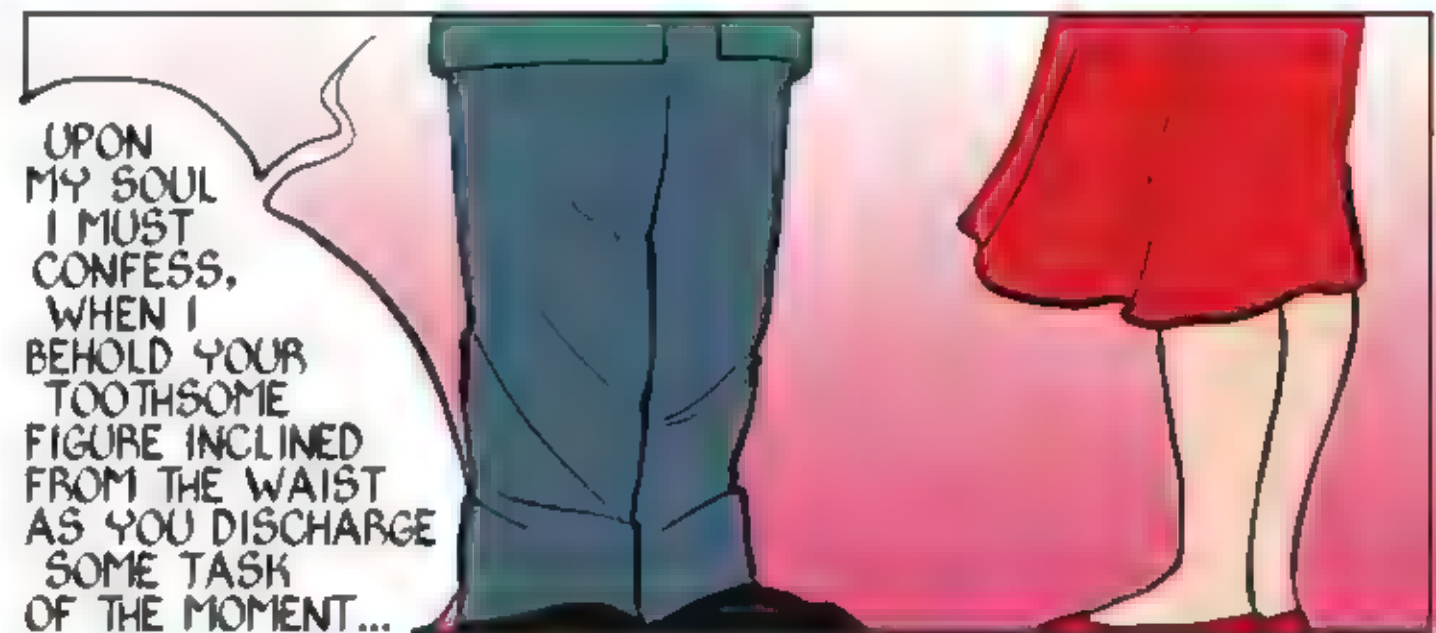
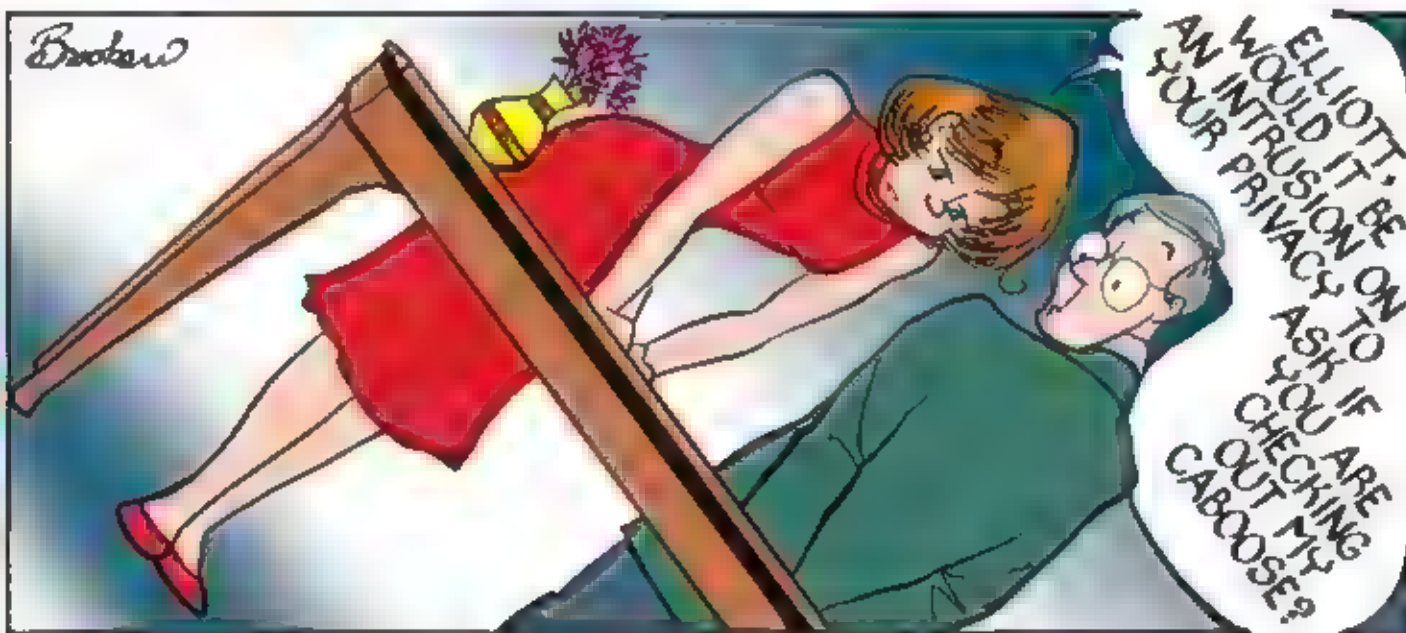
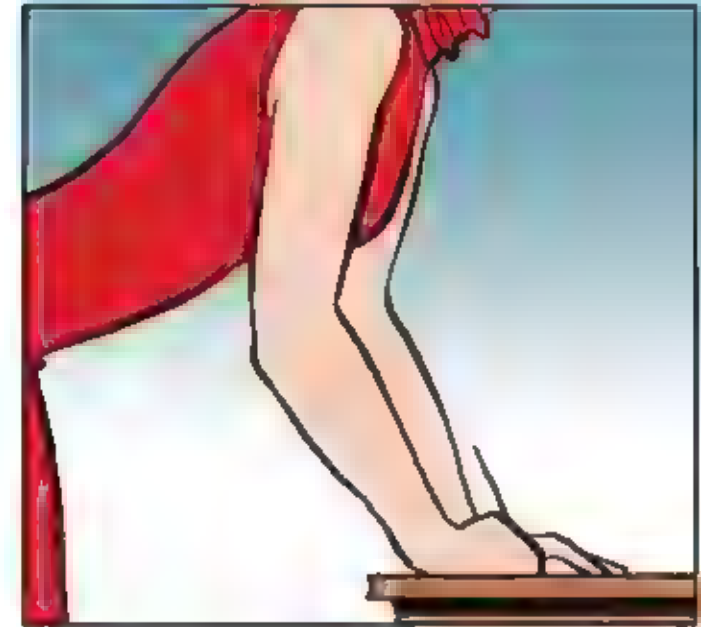
Brooke



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DOING NOTHING,  
ATTRACTIVELY,  
IS WHAT CATS  
DO BEST.



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SO, YOU GUYS  
REALLY LIKE  
LIVING WITH  
EACH  
OTHER?

EVERY GIRL NEEDS  
A GAY MAN TO BE  
HER CHUM AND  
CONFIDANT.

SOMEONE TO  
WATCH OUT FOR  
HER AND GIVE  
HER ADVICE...  
...AND TELL  
HER THE  
LOUSY  
TRUTH  
WHEN  
NOBODY  
ELSE  
WILL.

...AND TAP HIS WRIST-  
WATCH WHEN SHE COMES  
HOME AFTER 1 A.M., AND  
CRITICIZE HER WARDROBE  
AND DO HER HAIR PROPERLY,  
AND MAKE SURE SHE'S UP  
AND AT'EM IN THE  
MORNING...AND  
COOK HER GOOD,  
HEALTHY FOOD  
WHEN HER IDEA  
OF CUISINE  
IS HO-  
HO'S  
AND  
BUBBLE  
TEA...

...AND POINT OUT THE  
RUNS IN HER  
STOCKINGS...

CLEARLY  
HE  
CONSIDERS  
ME A  
TALL  
ORDER.

HELLO, MOM, I'M STAYING  
A FEW EXTRA DAYS WITH  
EDDA. I'M HAVING A GREAT  
TIME, AND I'VE DECIDED  
I WANT TO QUIT SCHOOL  
AND COME TO  
NEW YORK  
TO STUDY  
DANCE.

WHAT?  
...SURE.  
HOLD  
ON...



IT'S MY  
MOM. SHE'D  
LIKE TO  
TALK WITH  
YOU.

HELLO,  
MRS.  
ROSENZWEIG.

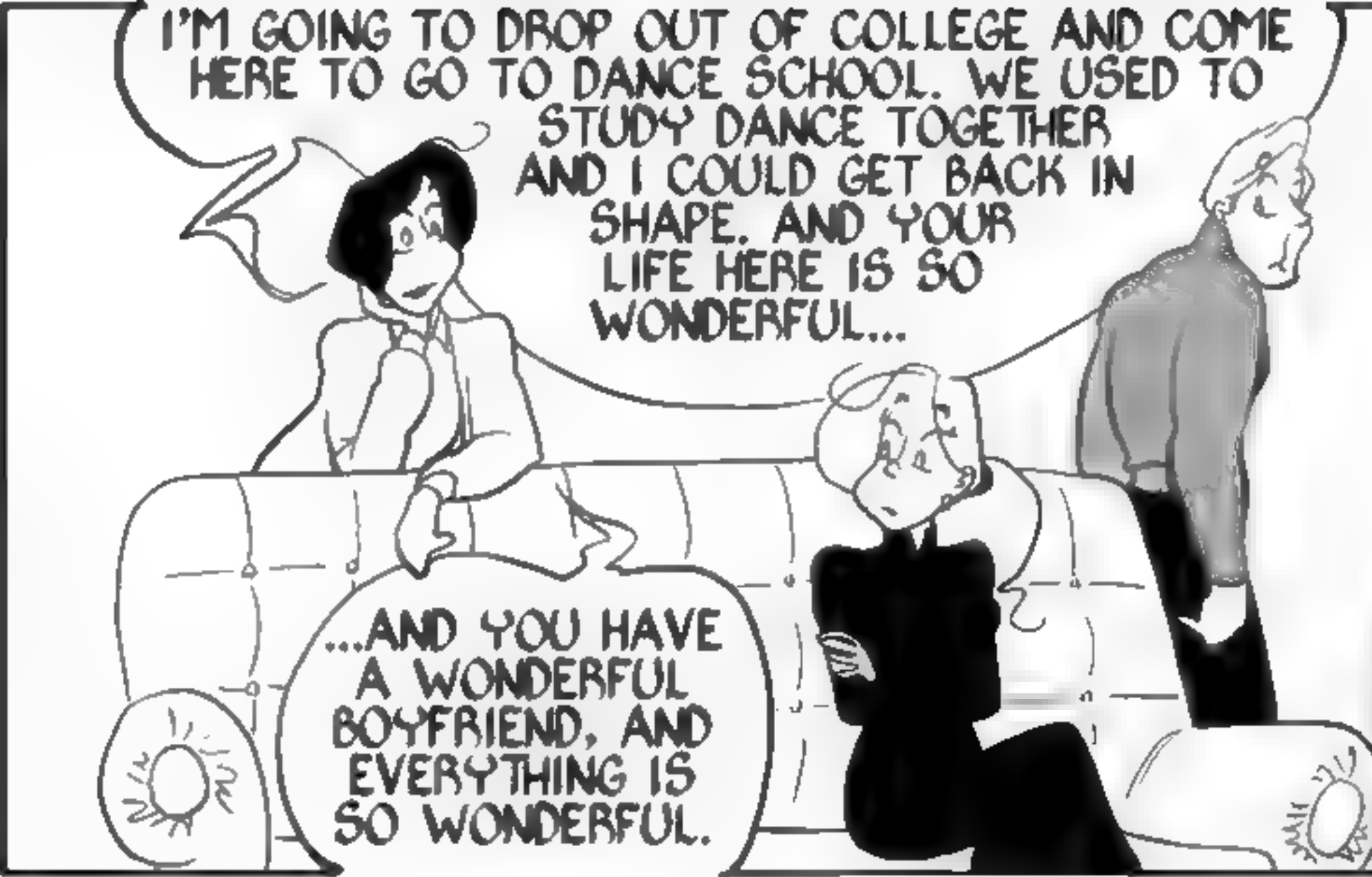


SHE SAID SHE HATES ME,  
CALLED ME BY A BRIEF  
ANGLO-SAXONISM AND  
SLAMMED DOWN THE PHONE.

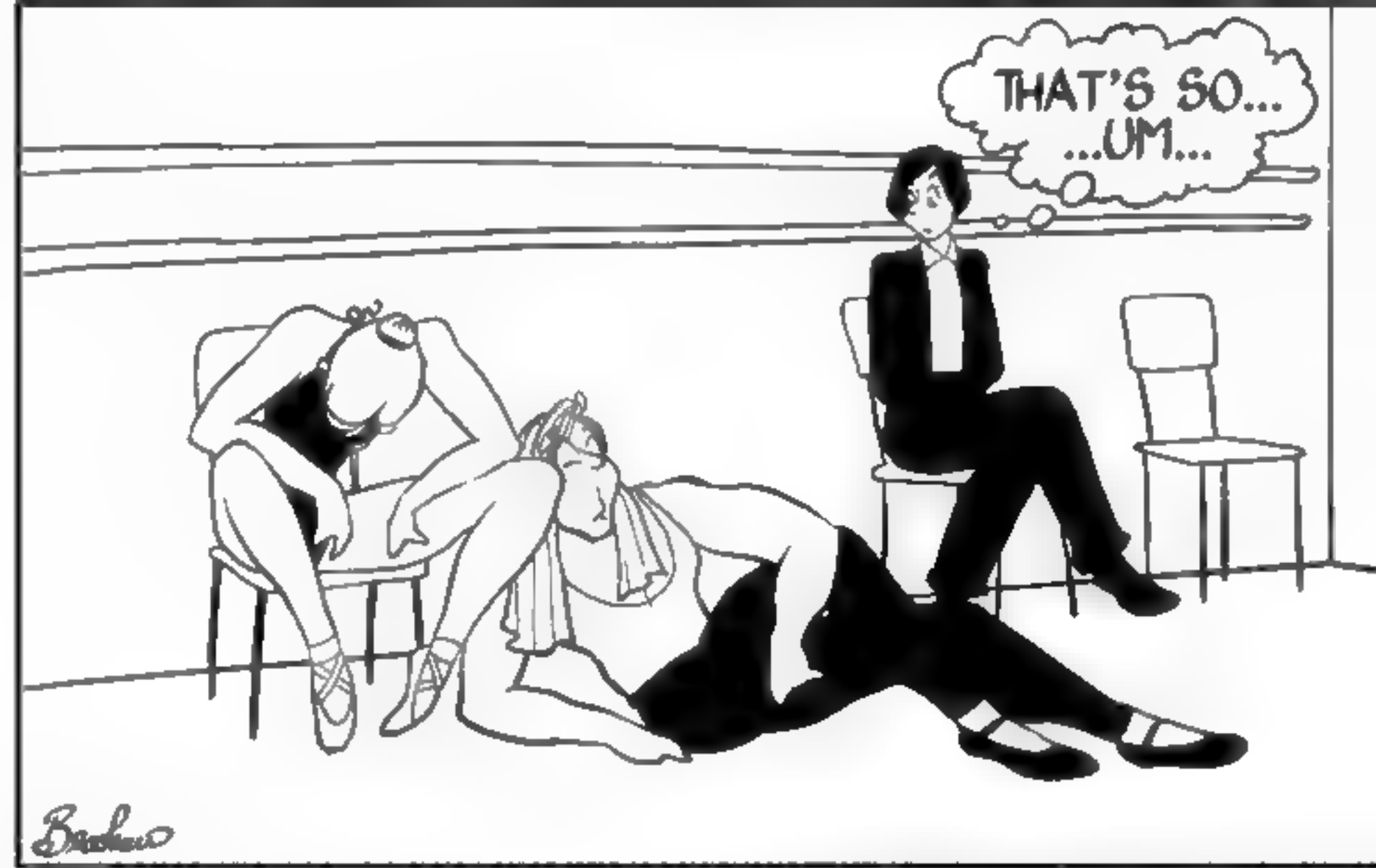
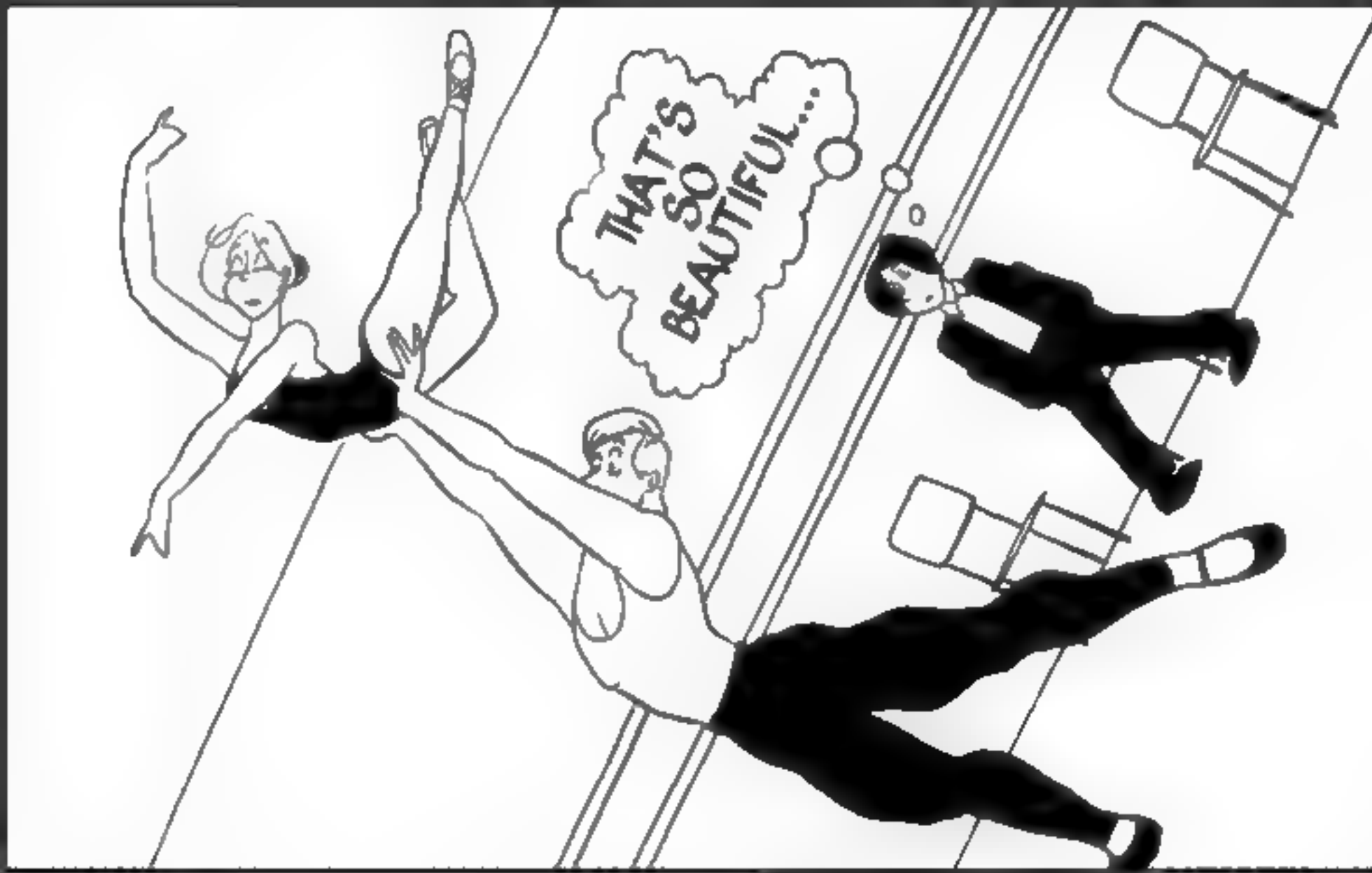


IS THIS  
A LOOP  
I WANT  
TO BE IN?

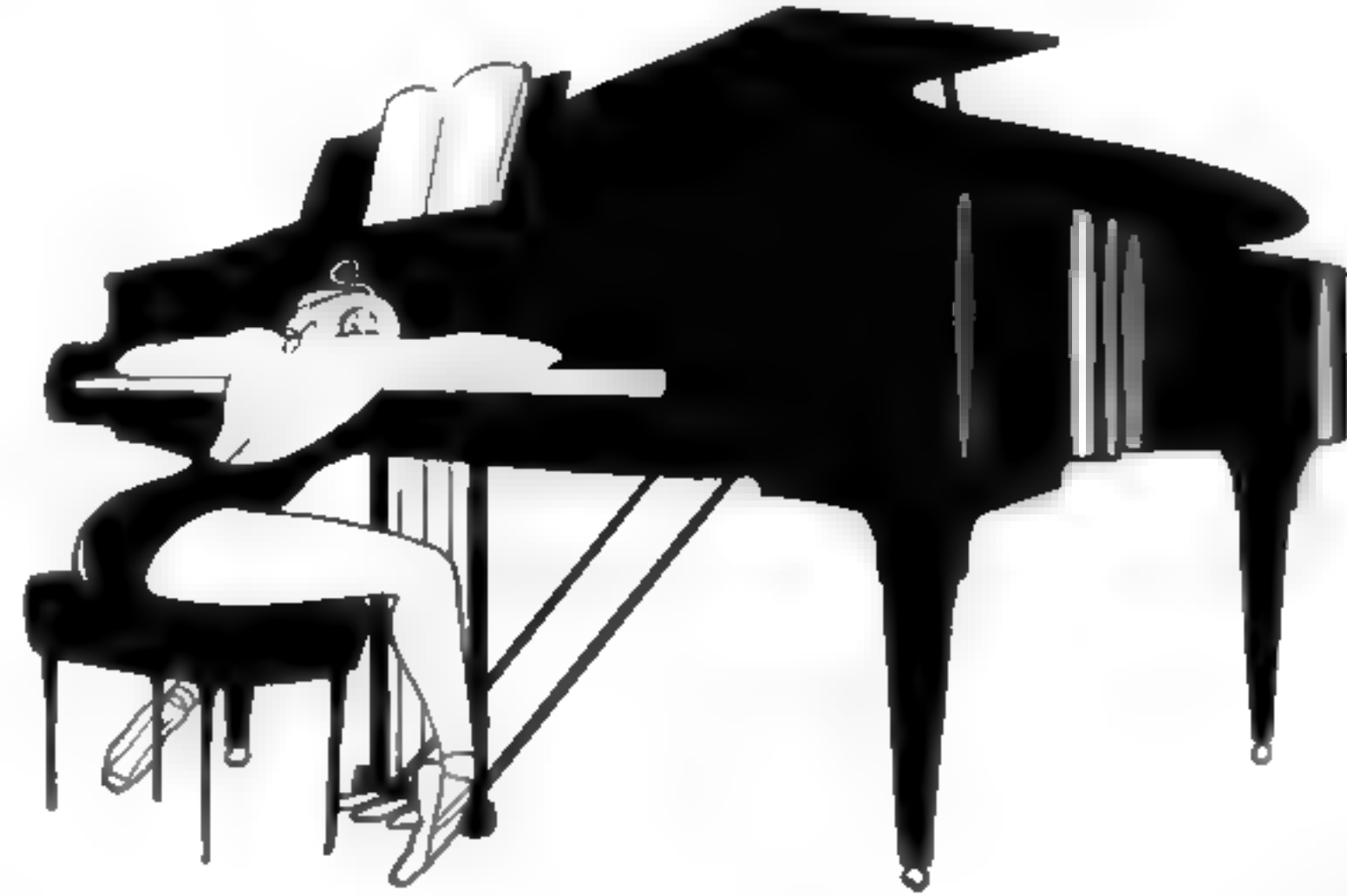
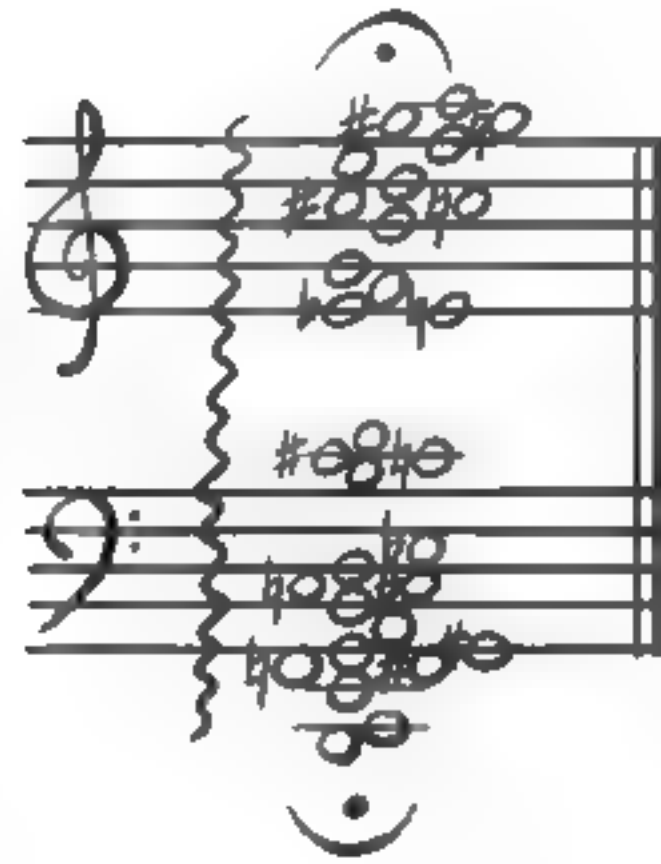








Brooke



Brooke

I WAS READY  
TO THROW OVER  
PRE-MED TO DANCE  
IN THE CITY,  
BECAUSE...  
BECAUSE IT WAS SO...  
...I DON'T KNOW WHAT  
I THOUGHT IT WAS.  
I GUESS, "GLAMOROUS."  
BUT YOU PEOPLE  
ARE LIKE SLED DOGS.  
YOUR LIVES AREN'T  
GLAMOROUS.



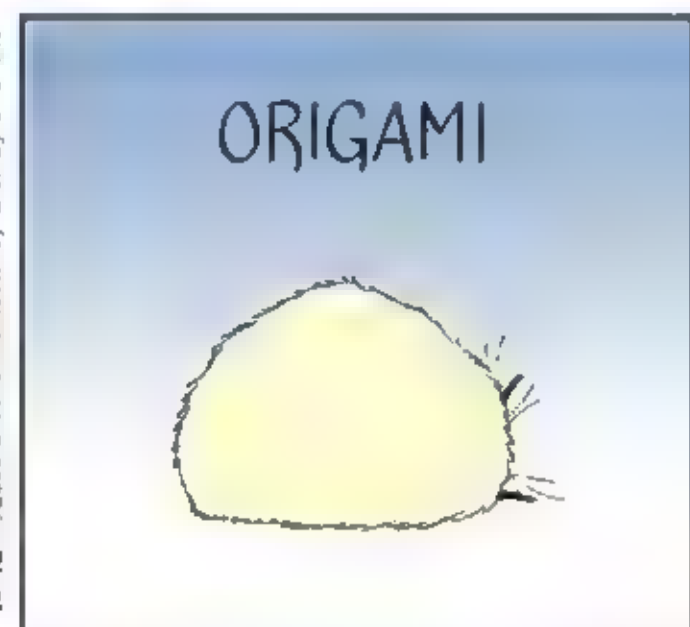
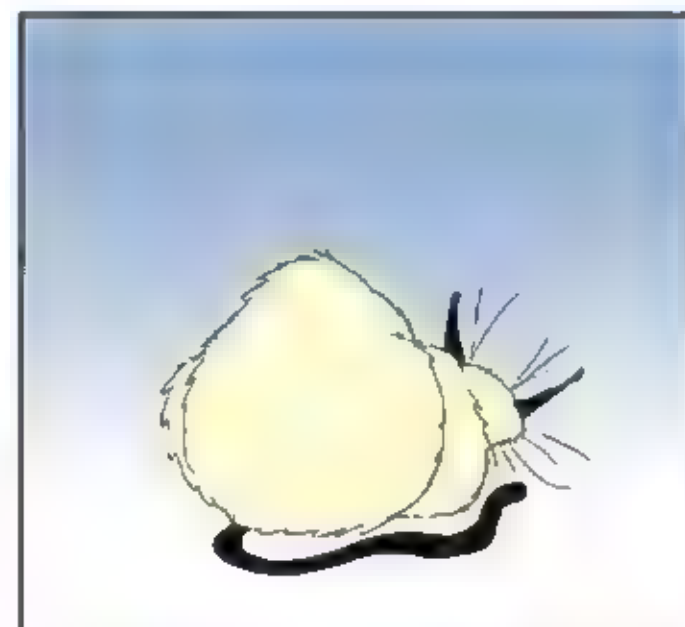
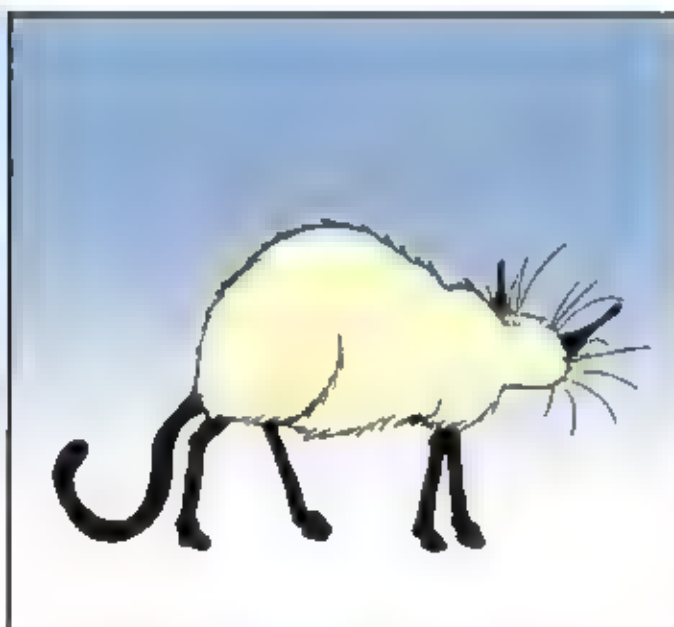
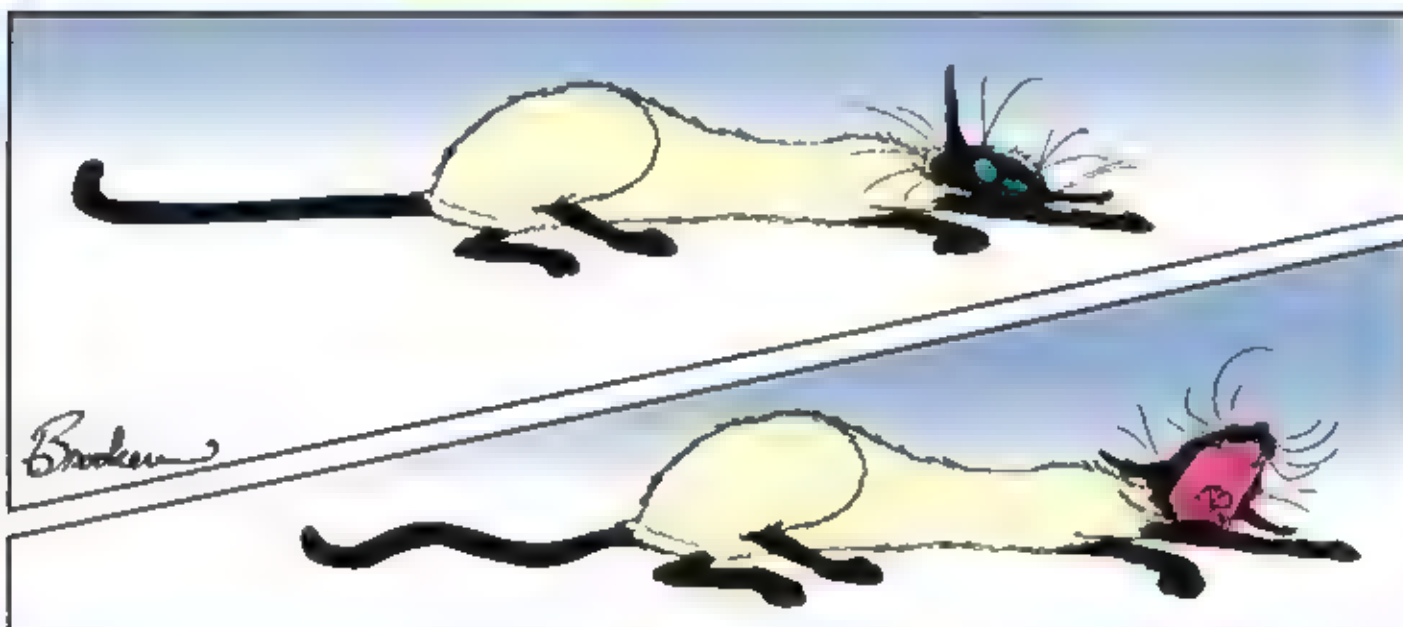
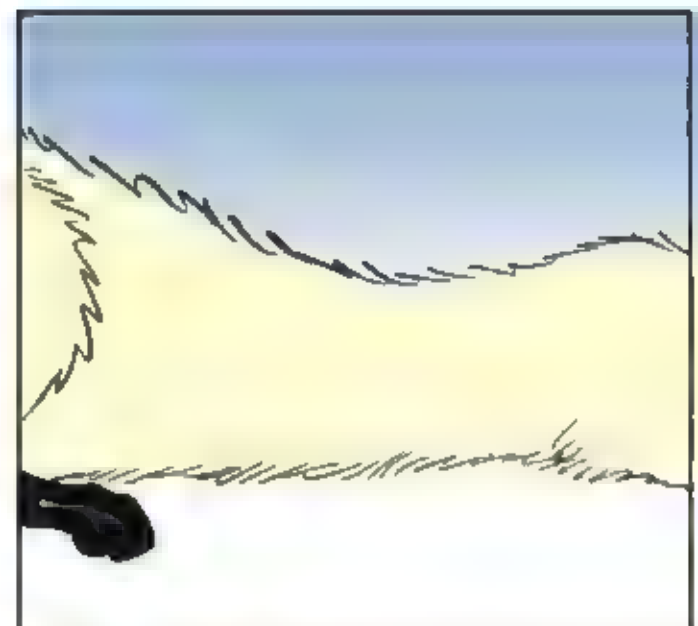
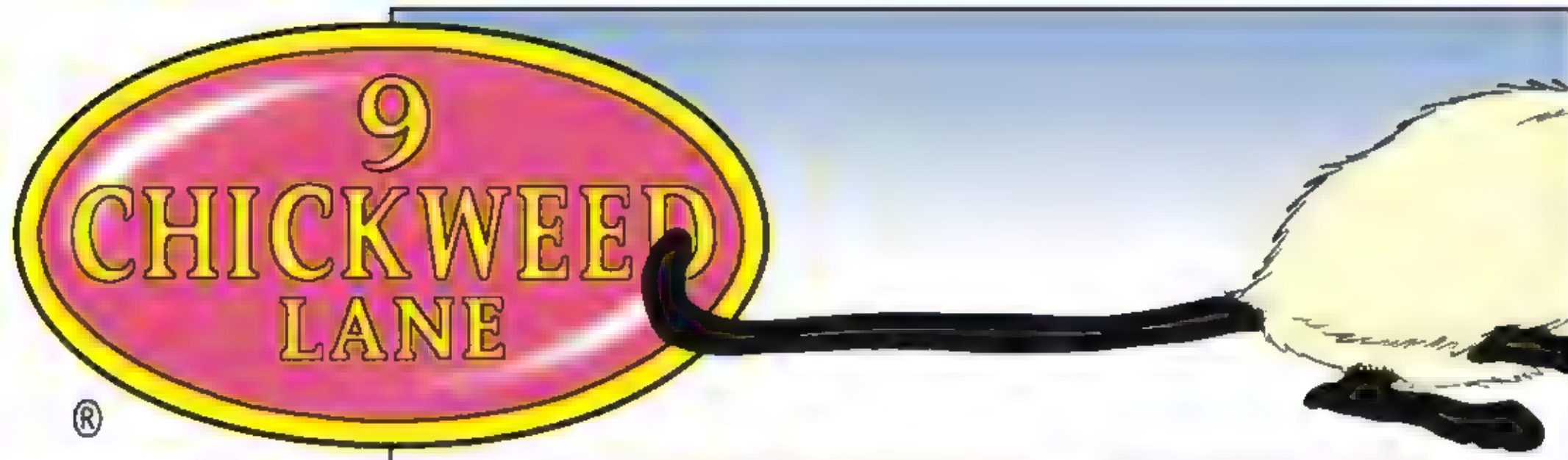
YOUR  
LIVES  
ARE...  
...THE  
IDITAROD.

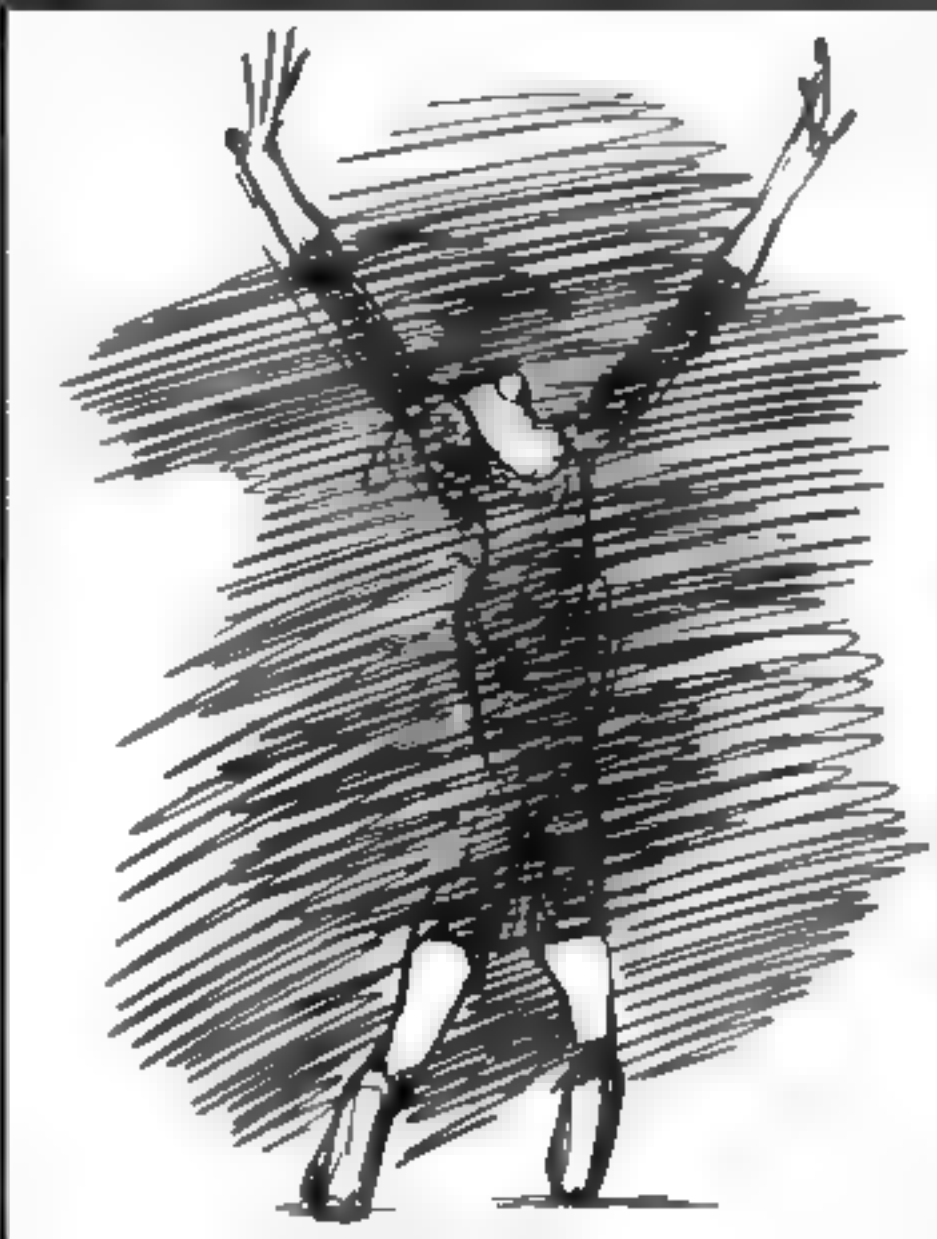


DID SHE  
SAY  
SOMETHING?

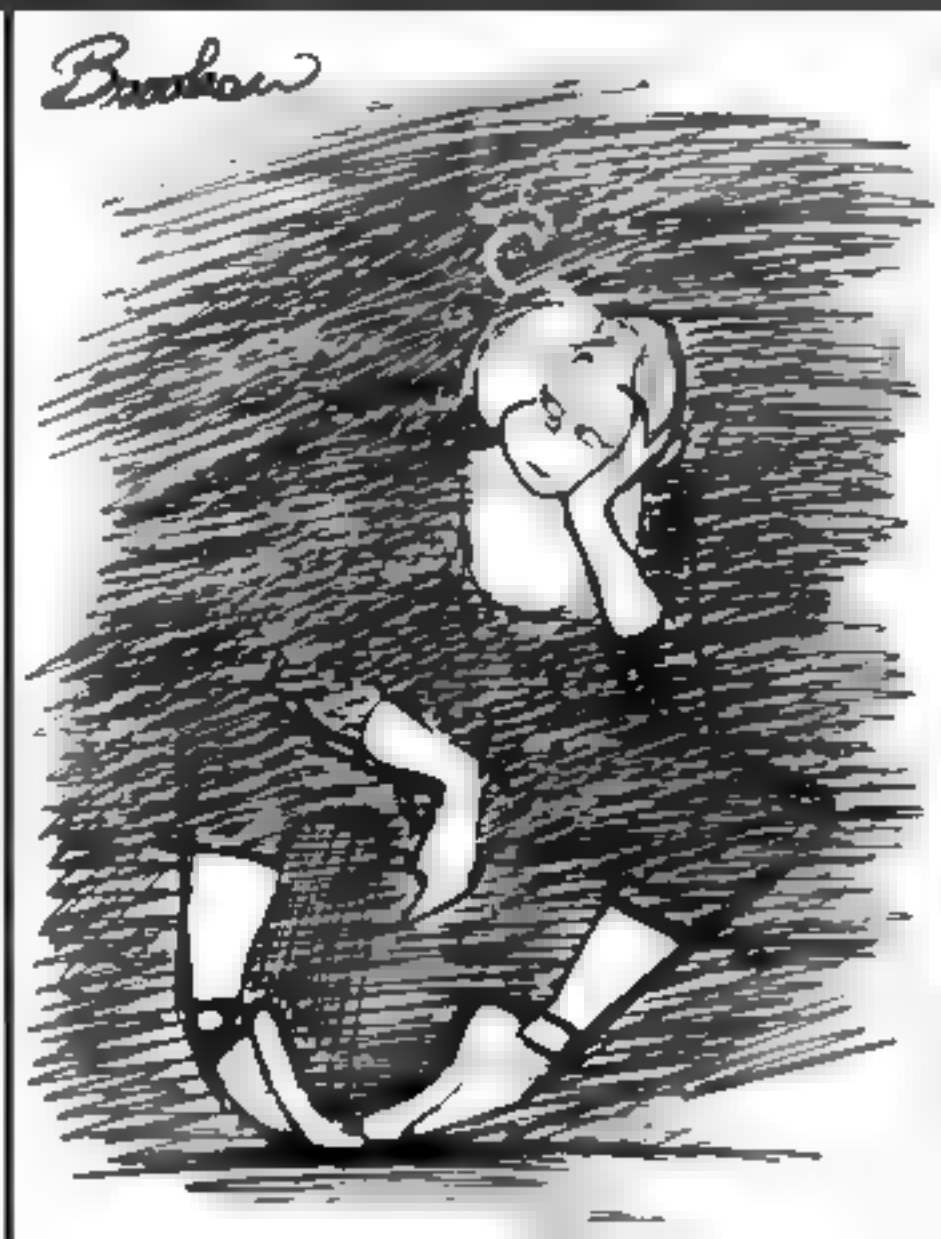
WHO?

Brother

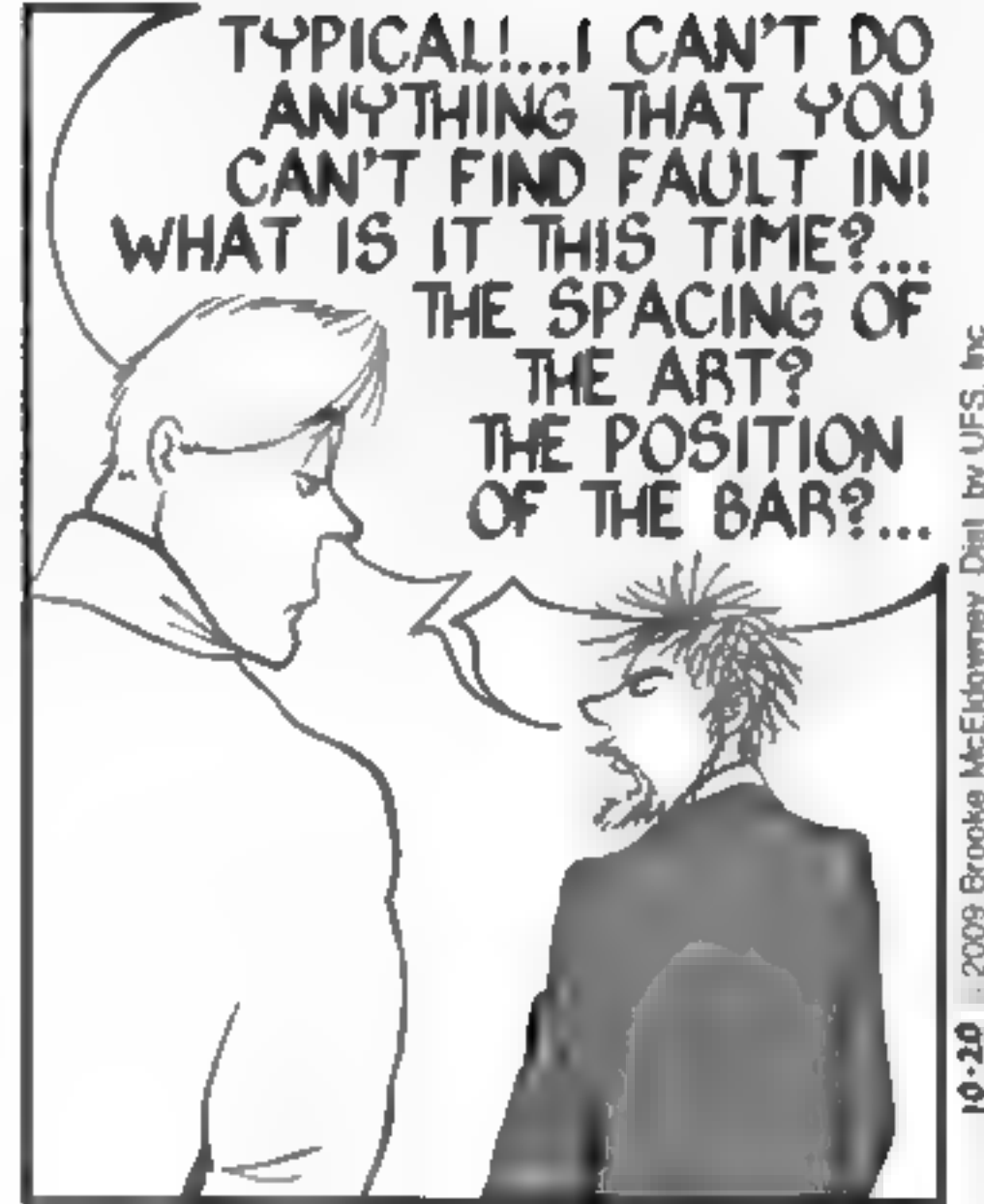




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# Special Theory of Cartoon Physics #1



FOR EVERY CARTOON CREATED  
IN THE UNIVERSE, THERE IS AN  
EQUAL AND OPPOSITE IMBECILE  
TO OBJECT TO IT.

Brooke



EXCELSIOR!

SPECIAL THEORY OF  
CARTOON PHYSICS  
NO. 2

WHAT IS ATTAINABLE  
IS A UNIFIED THEORY TO EXPLAIN  
THE UNIVERSE, TO EXPLAIN ALL  
CREATION AS WE KNOW IT,  
TO EXPLAIN THE NATURE OF  
THE GODHEAD ITSELF.



BUT ONLY  
AN IDIOT  
WILL TRY  
TO EXPLAIN  
A JOKE.

RATS.



Brooke

*Broken*



I JUST WANTED TO LET  
YOU KNOW THAT NOTHING  
WILL TAME ME, WILL EVER  
SHACKLE MY RAW, ANIMAL  
ENERGY...



...THE FLESHLY  
BEAST THAT FOREVER  
CROUCHES IN AMBUSH  
BENEATH MY SEEMINGLY  
SERENE EXTERIOR.

I JUST THOUGHT  
YOU'D WANT TO  
STAY INFORMED.



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YOU WANT HALF  
MY PEANUT  
BUTTER AND  
JELLY?

WHO  
WOULD  
REFUSE?



SEE YOU LATER.  
HAVE A GOOD REHEARSAL,  
BUN HEAD.

SAME  
TO YOU,  
CELLO  
JOCK.

*Brooke*

DID OUR GOOD-NATURED  
IMPUTATIONS OF MUTUAL  
STUPIDITY JUST MAKE  
YOU FEEL FLEETINGLY  
LIKE...

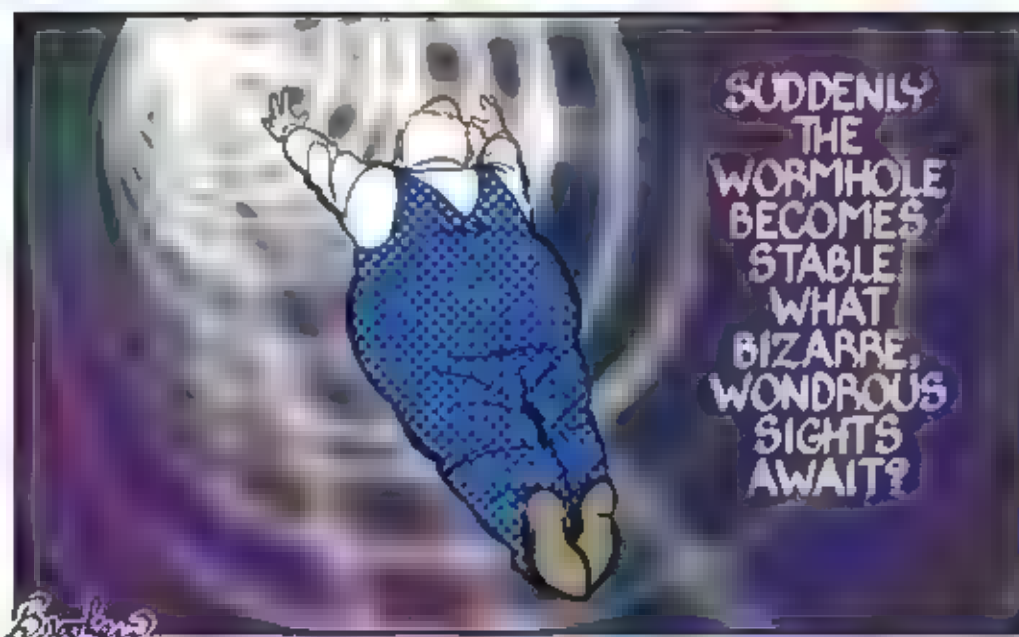
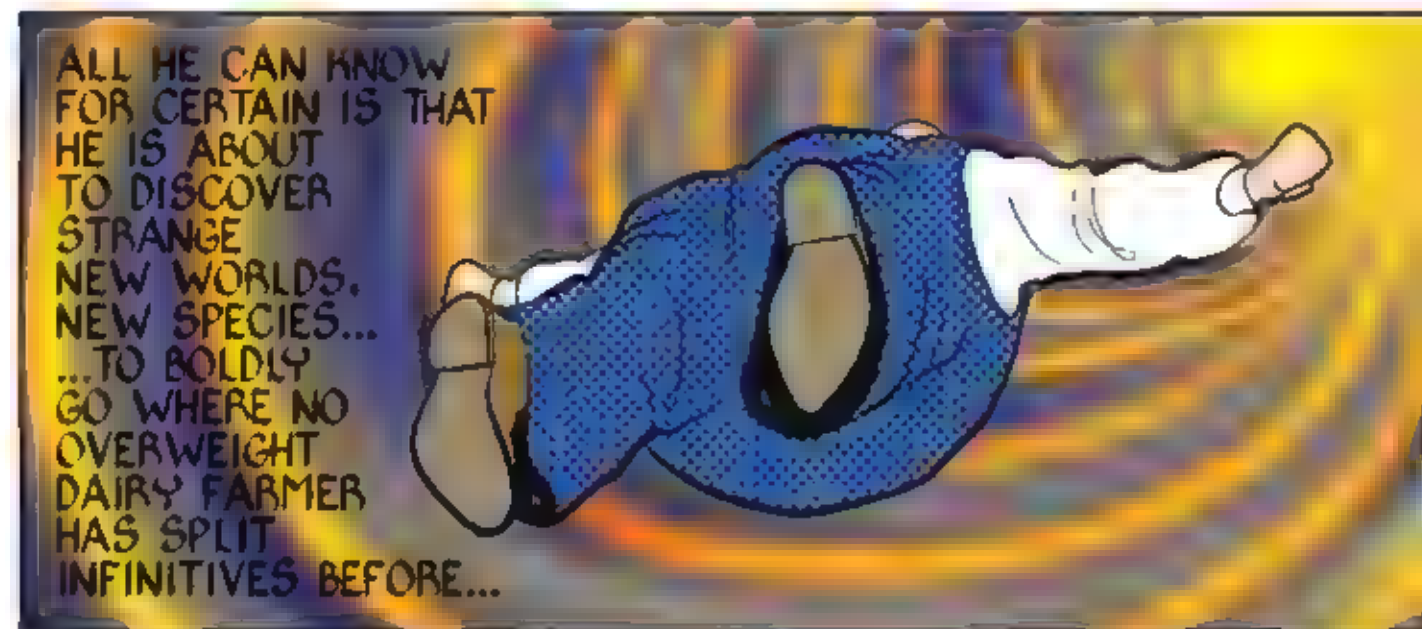
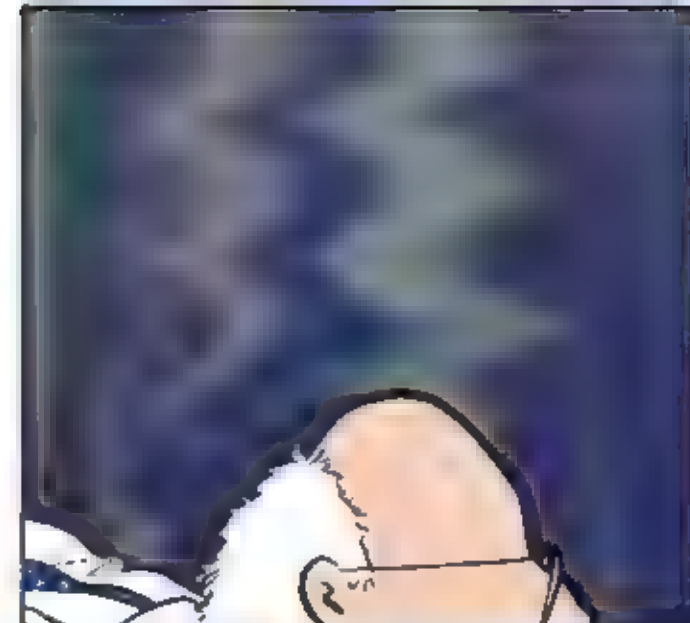
...A COOL  
KID IN HIGH  
SCHOOL?

YES, BUT I DON'T  
KNOW IF WE'LL EVER  
RECAPTURE THE MOMENT.

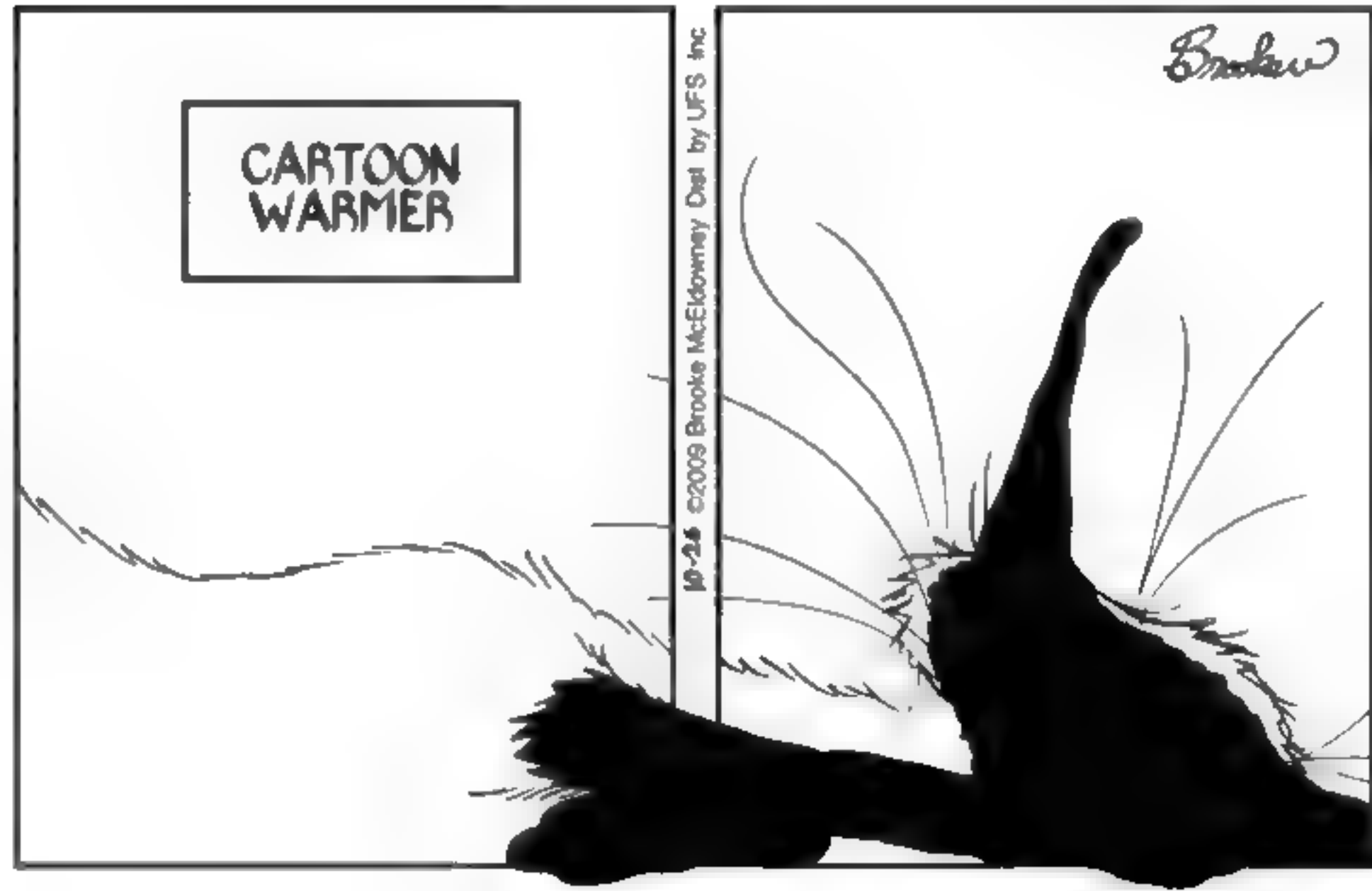
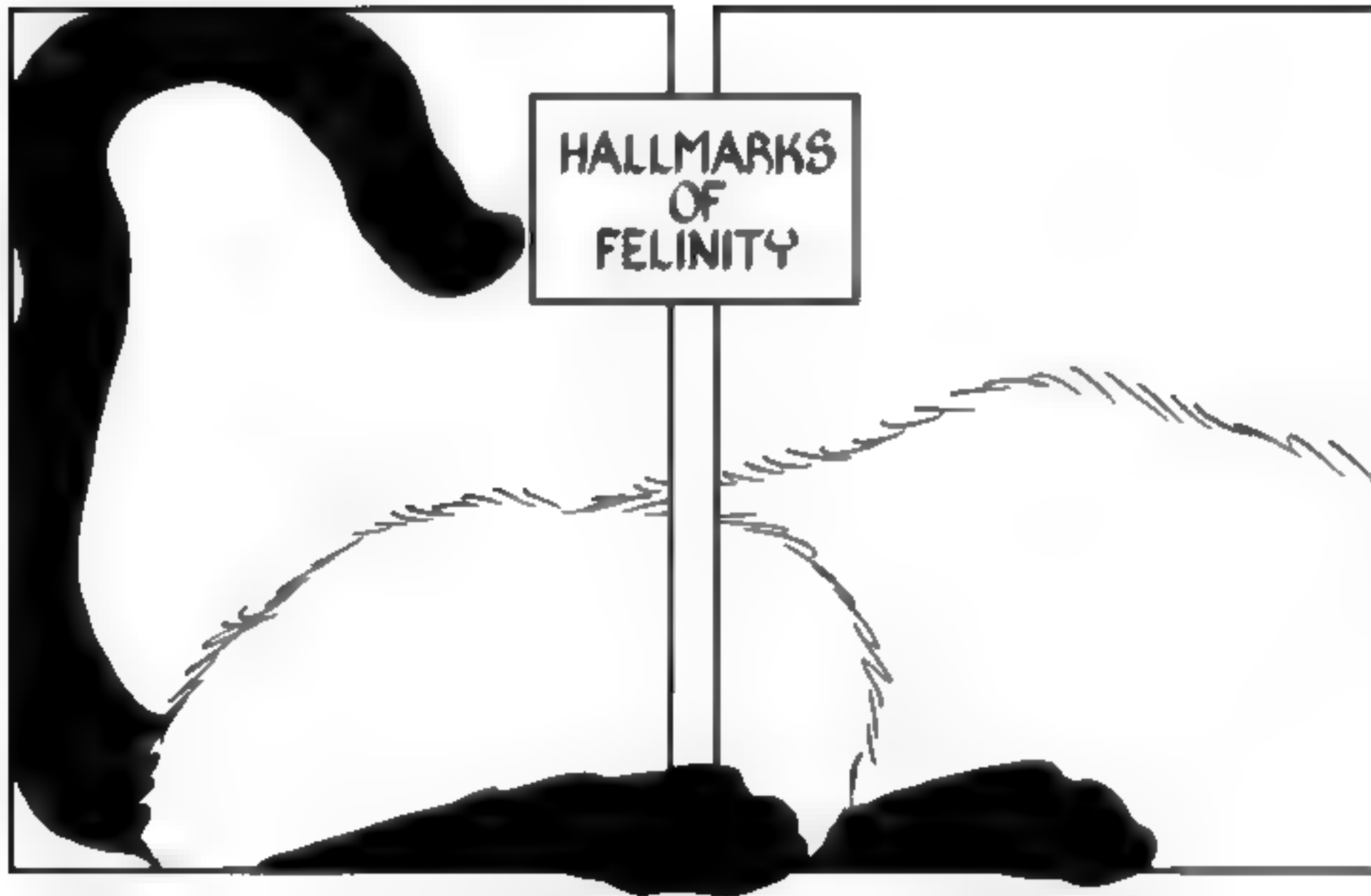


# 9 CHICKWEED LANE

®



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MOTHER...WHAT  
HAPPENED?! THEY SAID  
YOU COLLAPSED!

"COLLAPSED."  
WHAT KIND OF  
DIAGNOSIS IS  
THAT?! I WAS  
IN THE MARKET,  
AND THE NEXT  
THING I KNEW  
I WAS SITTING  
ON THE FLOOR.

THEN THEY RUSHED  
ME HERE, ASKING ME  
A MILLION STUPID  
QUESTIONS AND  
GIVING ME OXYGEN...

...AND DO YOU  
KNOW HOW MUCH  
THEY CHARGE FOR  
OXYGEN?!

IS SHE  
ALL RIGHT?

SHE  
MAY NEED  
OXYGEN.

...AND THE DOCTORS  
DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO  
YOU ARE...



HI, EDNA! I'M LINDA, YOUR  
DAY NURSE. HOW ARE WE  
FEELING TODAY, EDNA?

EXCUSE ME,  
HAVE WE  
MET?

UM...  
...NO.

TELL YOU WHAT...YOU STOP  
CALLING ME EDNA, AND  
ADDRESS ME AS  
MRS. O'MALLEY.  
IN RETURN, I WILL  
NOT GARROTE YOU  
WITH YOUR  
SPHYGMOMANO-  
METER.

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IS THIS MRS.  
O'MALLEY?

YES, DOCTOR...  
...BUT BEFORE YOU GO IN,  
SHE LIKES TO BE CALLED  
EDNA.

Brooke



Bracken

JULIETTE,  
DID I EVER TELL  
YOU HOW I MET  
AND FELL IN LOVE  
WITH YOUR  
FATHER?

....I NEVER  
HEARD YOU USE  
THE WORD "LOVE"  
IN THE SAME SENTENCE,  
FOR THAT MATTER IN  
THE SAME HEMISPHERE,  
WITH ANY MENTION  
OF DAD.

WHEN DISCUSSING HIM,  
YOU'VE SAID THINGS LIKE  
"BOSSY" AND "TRUST  
AGREEMENT" AND "DOWN-  
STAIRS" AND "SNORES"  
AND EVEN, IN A MOMENT  
OF RAPTURE, "HANDY."  
BUT NEVER  
"LOVE."

WELL, THAT'S  
BECAUSE OUR LOVE  
WAS RATHER  
INTENSE AND  
PASSIONATE AND  
CLOSE YOUR  
MOUTH.



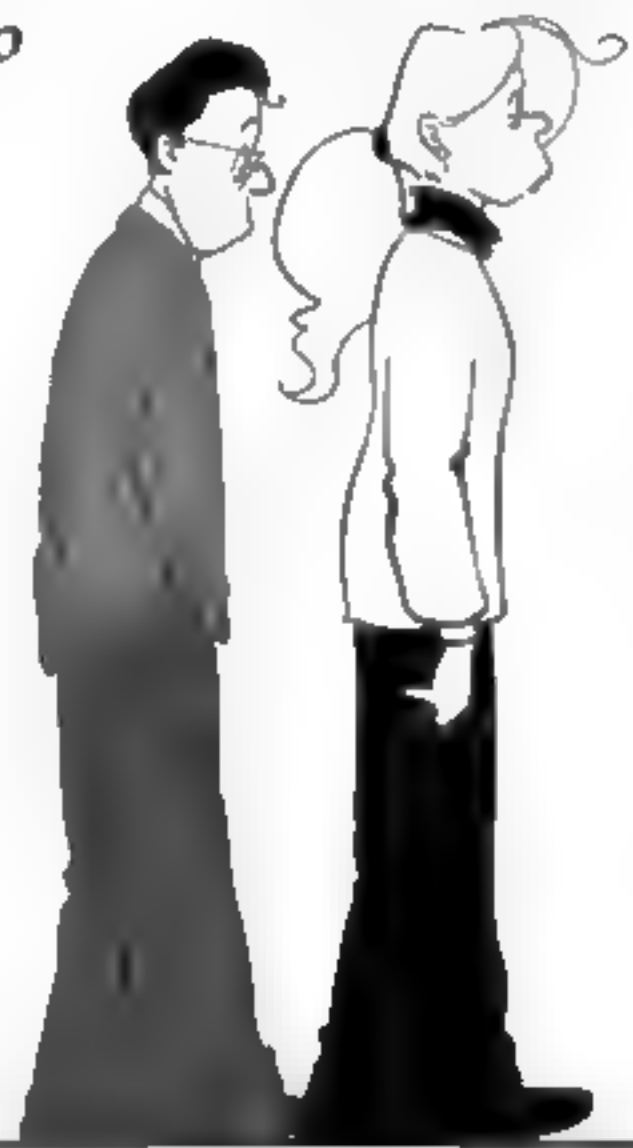
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I'M JUST SAYING I THINK YOU ACT A LITTLE PROTECTIVE WHEN I CROSS THE STREET.

NONSENSE.







SOMETIMES I FEEL  
MY BIOLOGICAL CLOCK  
TICKING.



Brooke

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BUT IT'S  
REALLY NICE  
WHEN YOU  
WIND IT.



YOU'VE BEEN PRETTY  
SCARCE SINCE I WENT  
INTO THE HOSPITAL.  
WHERE WERE YOU?



I'VE BEEN PINCH-HITTING  
FOR AUNTIE ETHEL'S  
ADVICE COLUMN UNTIL  
THEY SET BAIL FOR HER.

DEAR AUNTIE ETHEL,  
MY MOTHER WON'T SPEAK  
TO MY BOYFRIEND OR ME  
SINCE WE MOVED IN  
TOGETHER. SHE SAYS  
WE'RE IMMORAL. I SAY  
SHE WON'T GET WITH THE  
TIMES. WHAT DO YOU  
THINK?



RUB THRICE DAILY WITH  
OWL DROPPINGS, BEING  
CAREFUL FIRST TO PICK  
OUT THE VERMIN BONES.  
THEY MAKE A DANDY  
BROTH.



IT'S  
SURPRISINGLY  
EASY WORK.



DEAR AUNTIE ETHEL,  
MY RELATIONSHIPS  
ALWAYS HAVE BEEN  
SHALLOW, TAWDRY,  
PHYSICAL AFFAIRS;  
TACTILE,  
NONVERBAL,  
HEAVY-  
BREATHING,  
CONDUCTED  
MAINLY IN  
THE DARK...



EXCUSE ME...WHAT IS  
THE NATURE OF  
YOUR COMPLAINT?



I  
WASN'T  
COMPLAINING.



PROCEED.



DEAR AUNTIE ETHEL,  
I HAVE A GOD COMPLEX.  
IT STARTED AROUND  
THE TIME I CREATED  
THE UNIVERSE.  
WHAT SHOULD  
I DO?



TRY PRAYER,  
AND SEE IF YOU  
GET A BUSY  
SIGNAL.





SUMMIT



ACCUSATION



ULTIMATUM



CONCESSION



DÉTENTE





IT'S FUNNY...  
...EVERY  
TIME  
WE'RE  
LATE  
FOR WORK,  
CROWDS  
SEEM  
TO PART  
FOR US,  
AS IF  
THEY  
DAREN'T  
BLOCK  
OUR  
PATH.

I WONDER  
WHY?

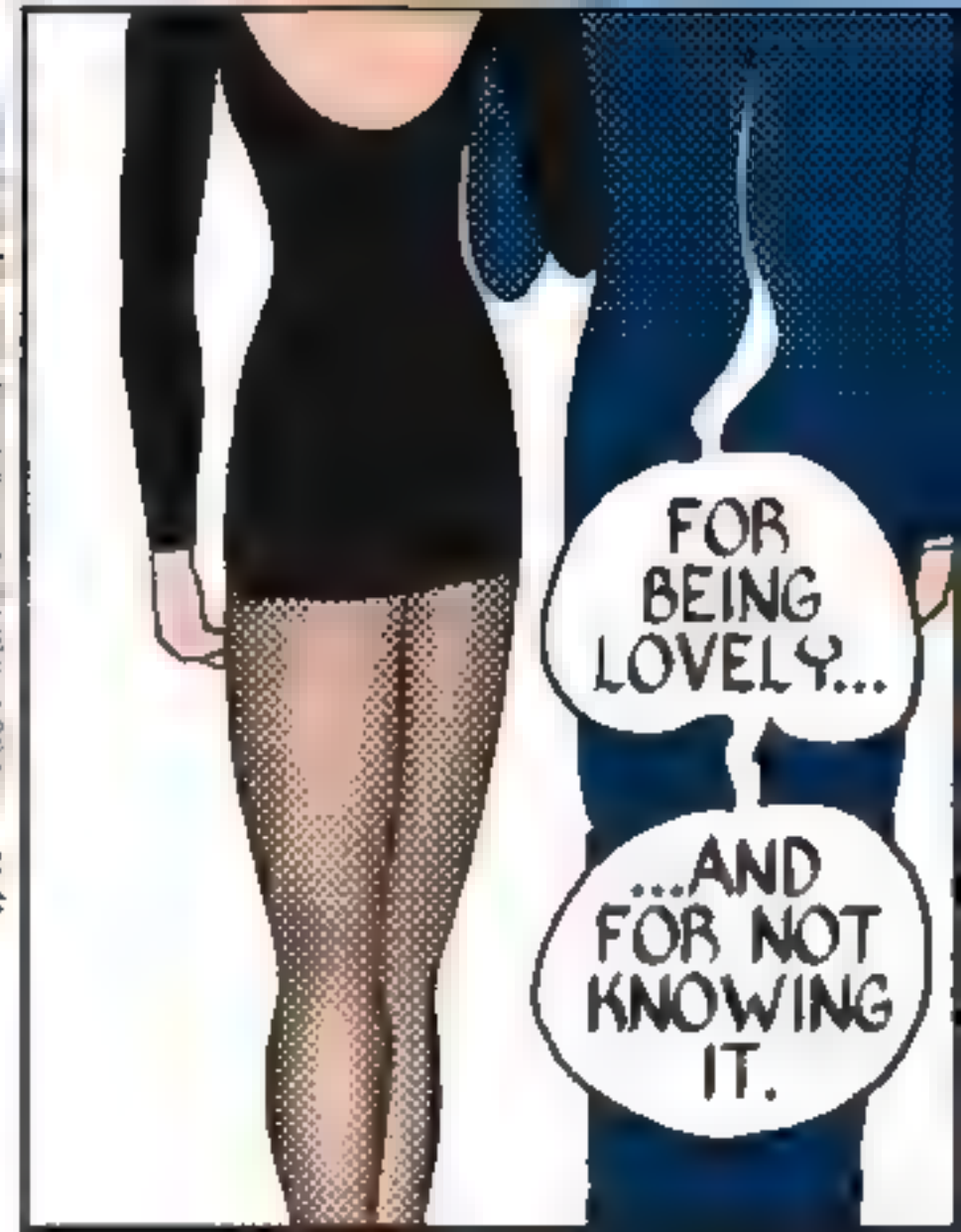
Brooks

IS MY  
PRESENCE  
THAT  
FORMIDABLE?





Brooke







Brooke









VIEW FROM  
A CARTOONIST'S  
CHAIR

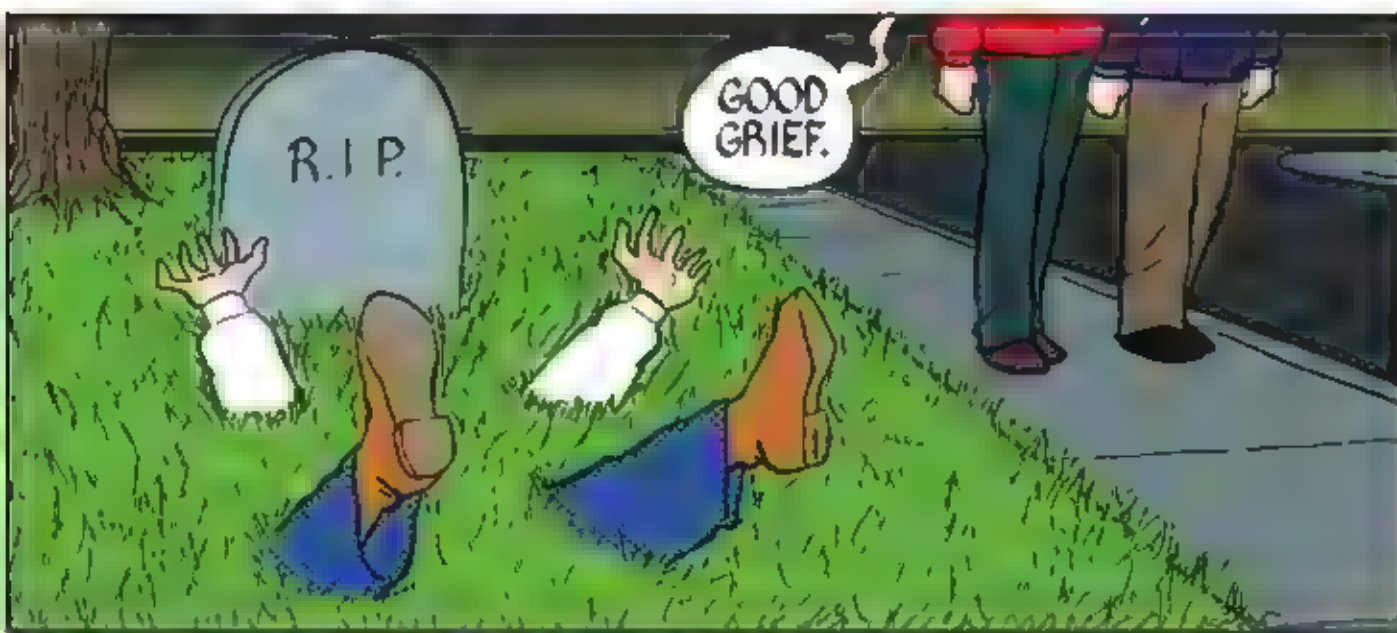
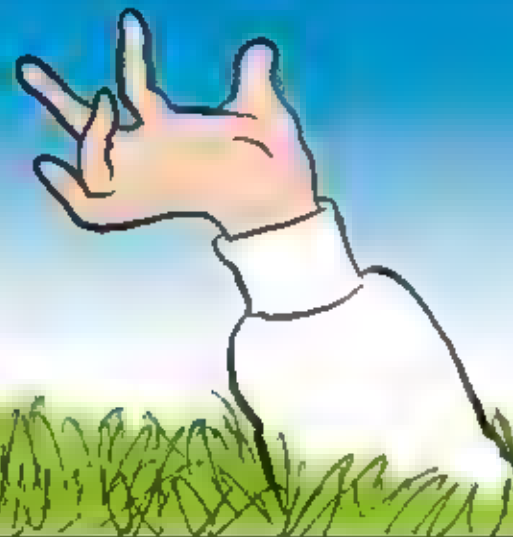
SIAMESE CAT ENGAGED  
IN COVERT SURVEILLANCE  
OF A POSSIBLY FERAL  
SCRUNCHIE



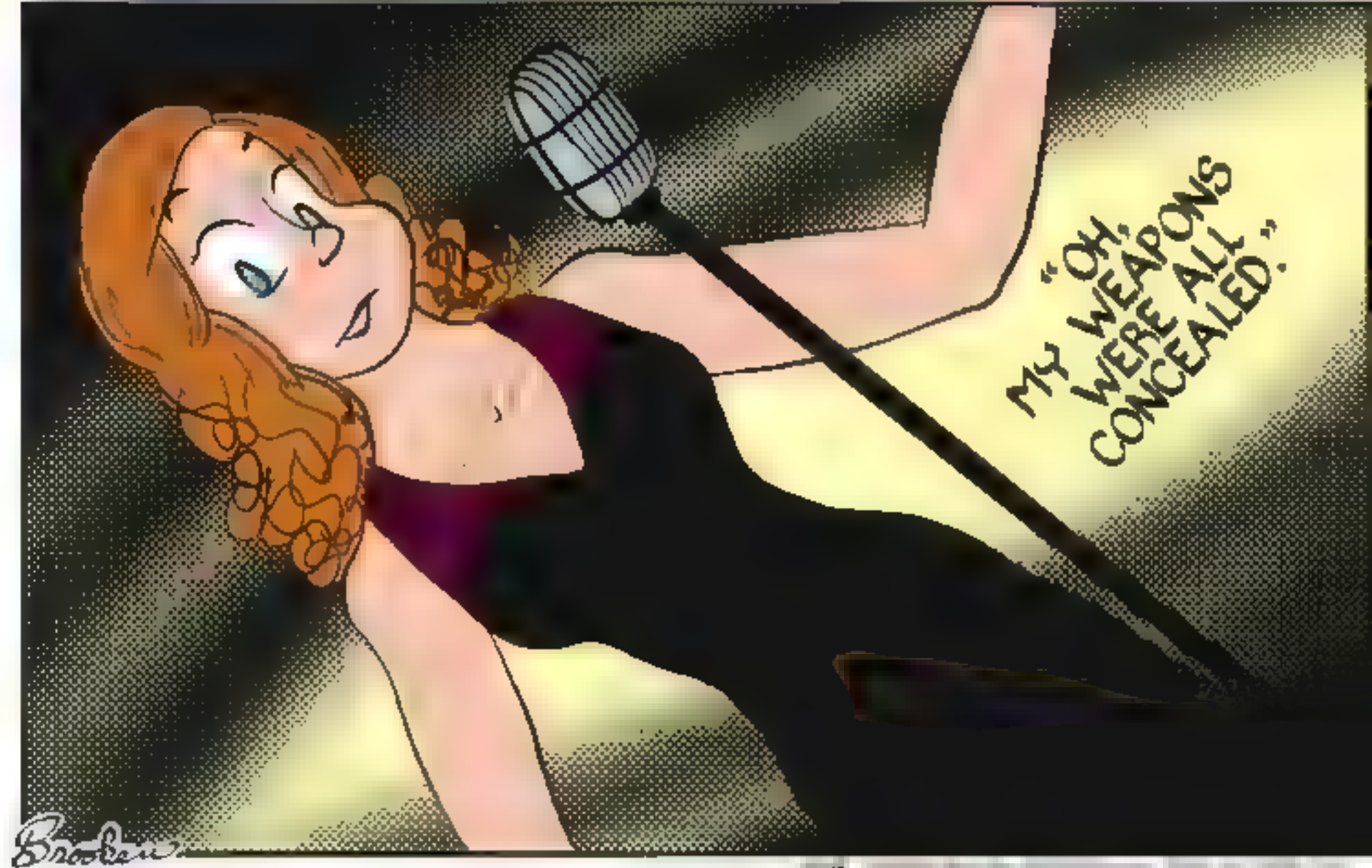
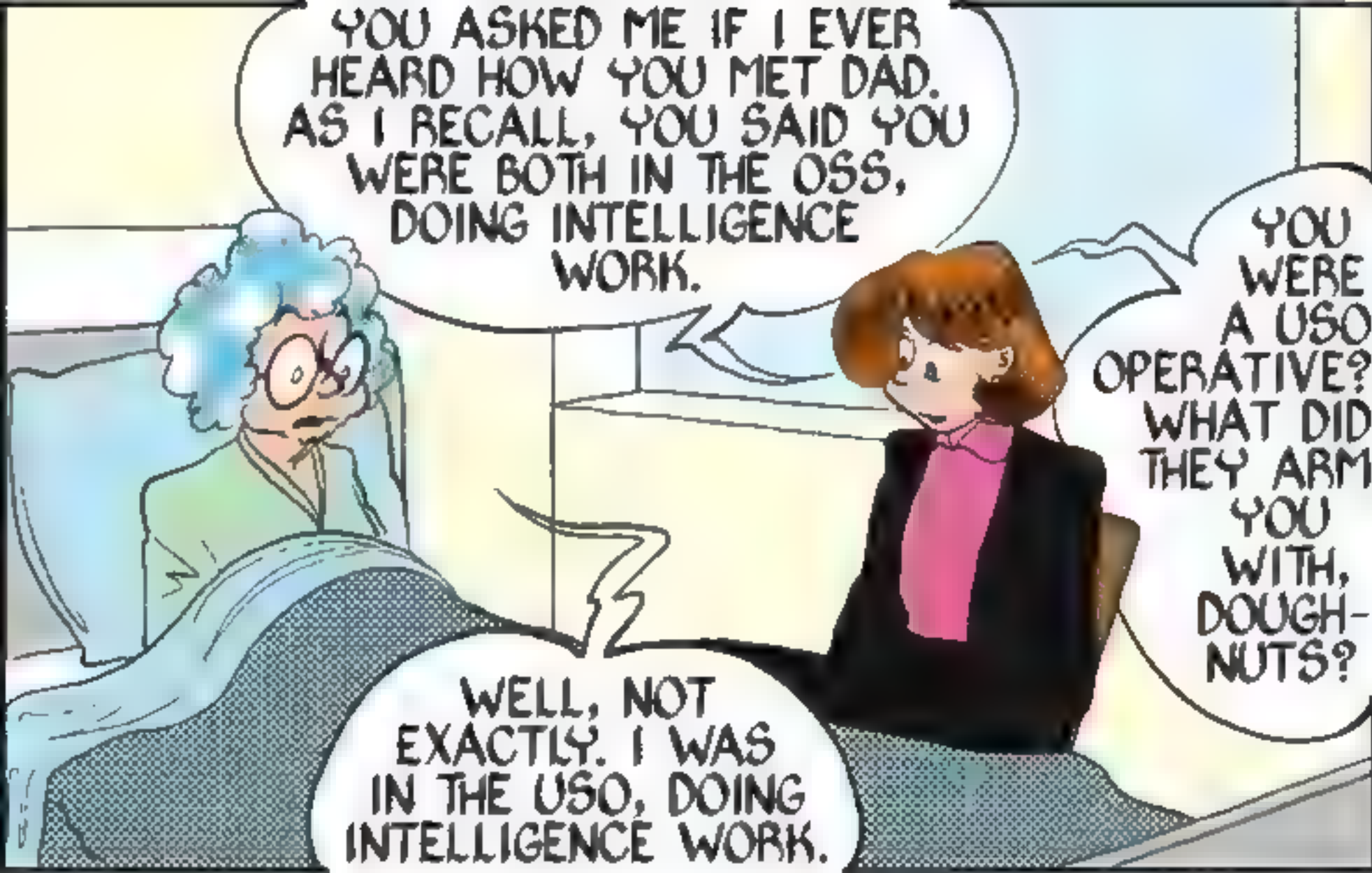
*Brooke*

# 9 CHICKWEED LANE

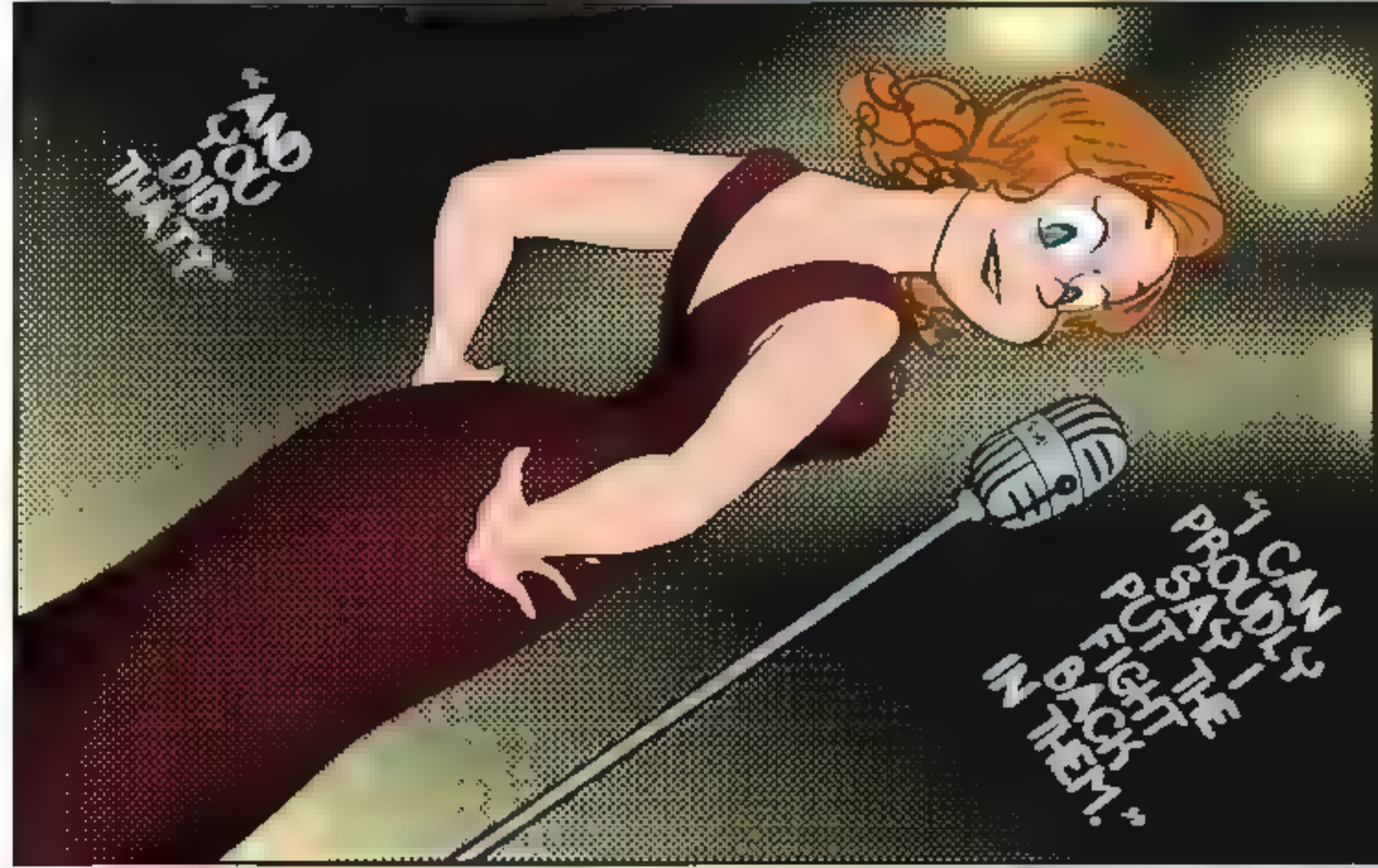
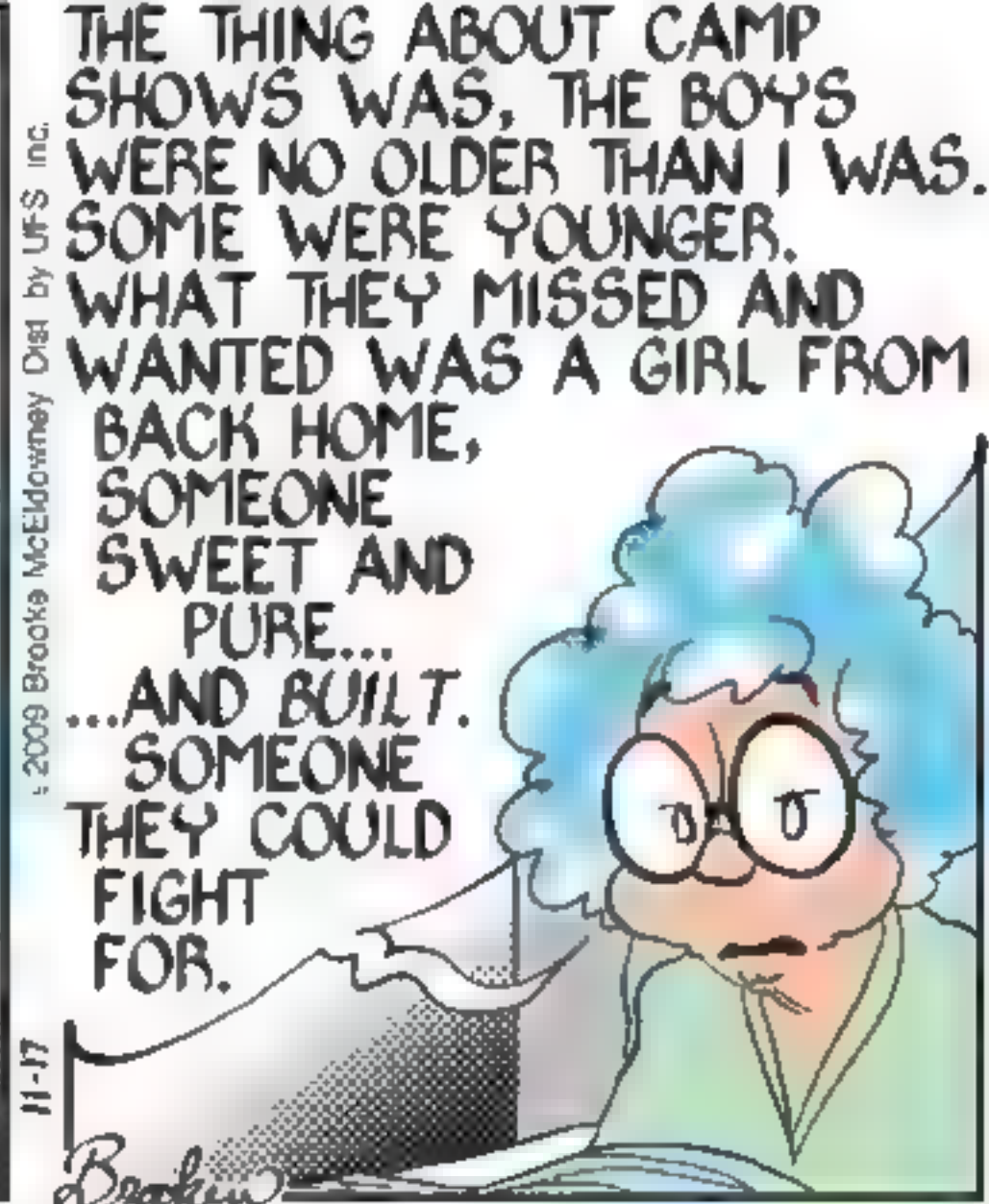
®













WHAT YOU'RE SAYING ABOUT ENTERTAINING THE TROOPS...ANYMORE IT'S PRETTY POLITICALLY INCORRECT.

MISSING YOUR HOME AND FAMILY, AND BEING IN DANGER ALL THE TIME ARE VERY VISCERAL THINGS.

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11-18

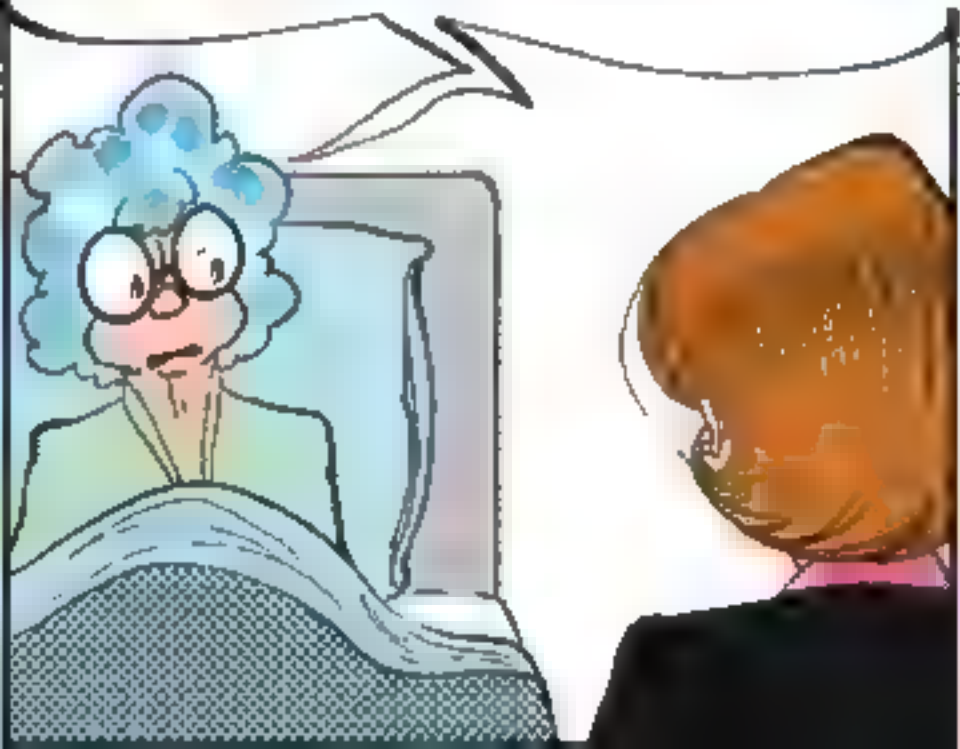
HAVING YOUR THOUGHTS GOVERNED FOR CORRECT CONTENT BY A BUNCH OF UNIVERSITY PRIGS AND WANNABE DICTATORS AT HOME IS ANTI-FREEDOM.

Brooke





THERE WERE LOTS OF US  
IN THE USO SHOWS. AND  
SOME WERE STARS...  
BOB HOPE, HEDY LAMARR,  
RITA HAYWORTH. I WAS  
JUST EDIE ERNST, EVERY  
BOY'S STEADY FROM HOME.



"I'D TALK TO THEM AFTER  
THE SHOWS, AND THEY'D  
HOLD MY HANDS FOR A  
MOMENT AS IF THEY  
WERE HOLDING SOMEONE  
ELSE'S HANDS... THEN I'D  
KISS THEM ON THE CHEEK  
GOODBYE..."



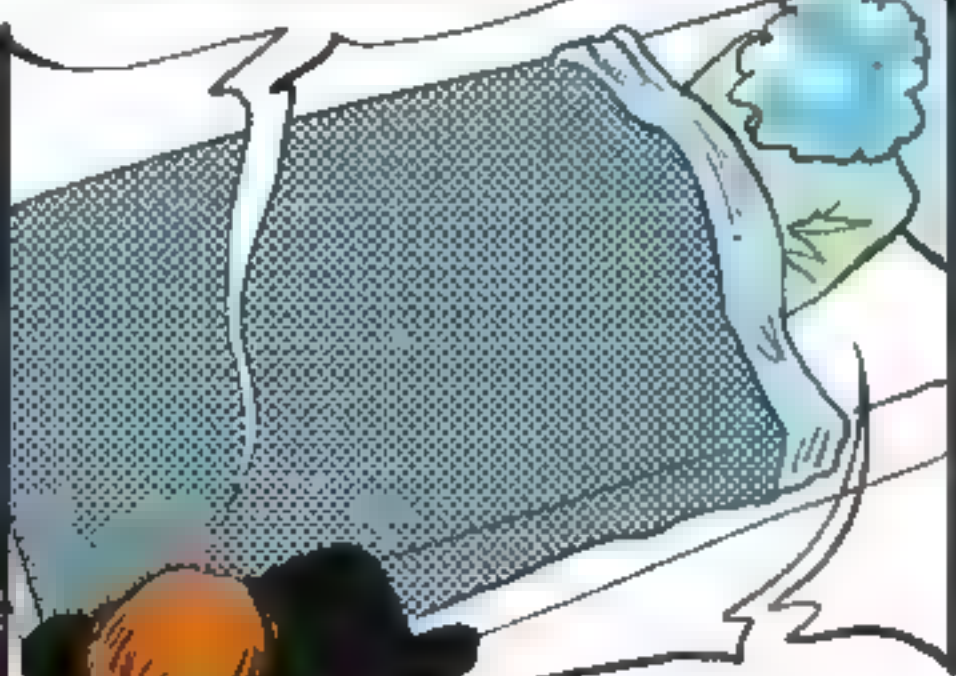
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THEN  
THEY'D  
GO OUT  
TO DIE.



WHY DID YOU TELL ME  
YOU WERE IN THE OSS  
IF YOU WERE A  
USO SINGER?



THAT'S  
WHERE BILL  
CAME IN. HE WAS  
A LIEUTENANT IN THE OSS.

HE SAW ME PERFORMING AT  
A CAMP SHOW, AND ASKED  
ME OUT AFTERWARD.  
I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT  
WE TALKED ABOUT, BUT  
BILL HAD GOTTEN  
ME TO SAY  
MORE THAN  
I REALIZED.



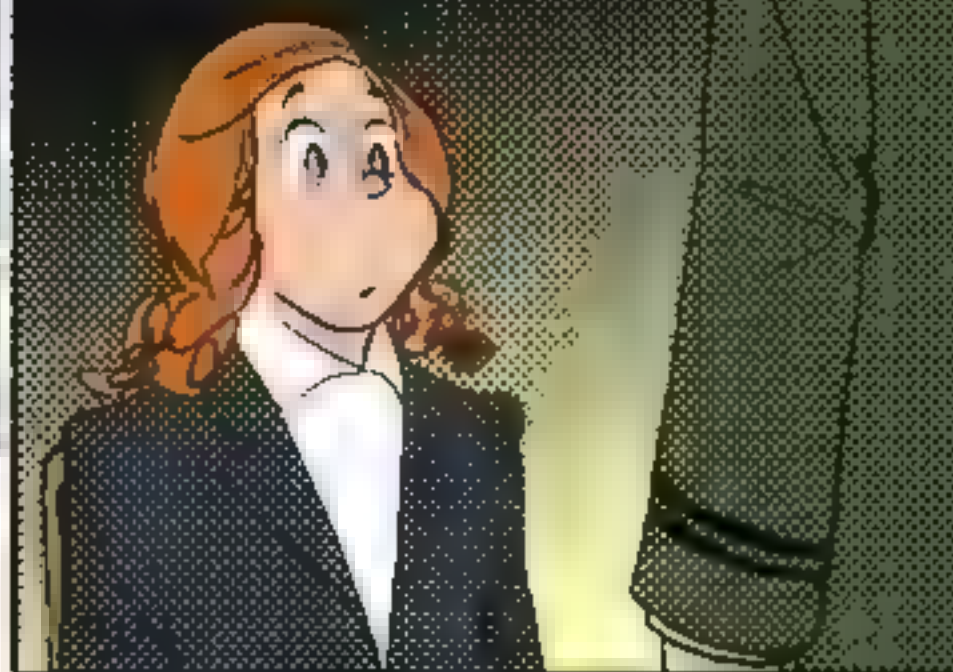
Barlow

"BECAUSE LATER A COUPLE  
OF TROOPS APPEARED AND  
ESCORTED ME BY JEEP  
TO SOMEBODY'S  
OFFICE MILES  
AWAY."

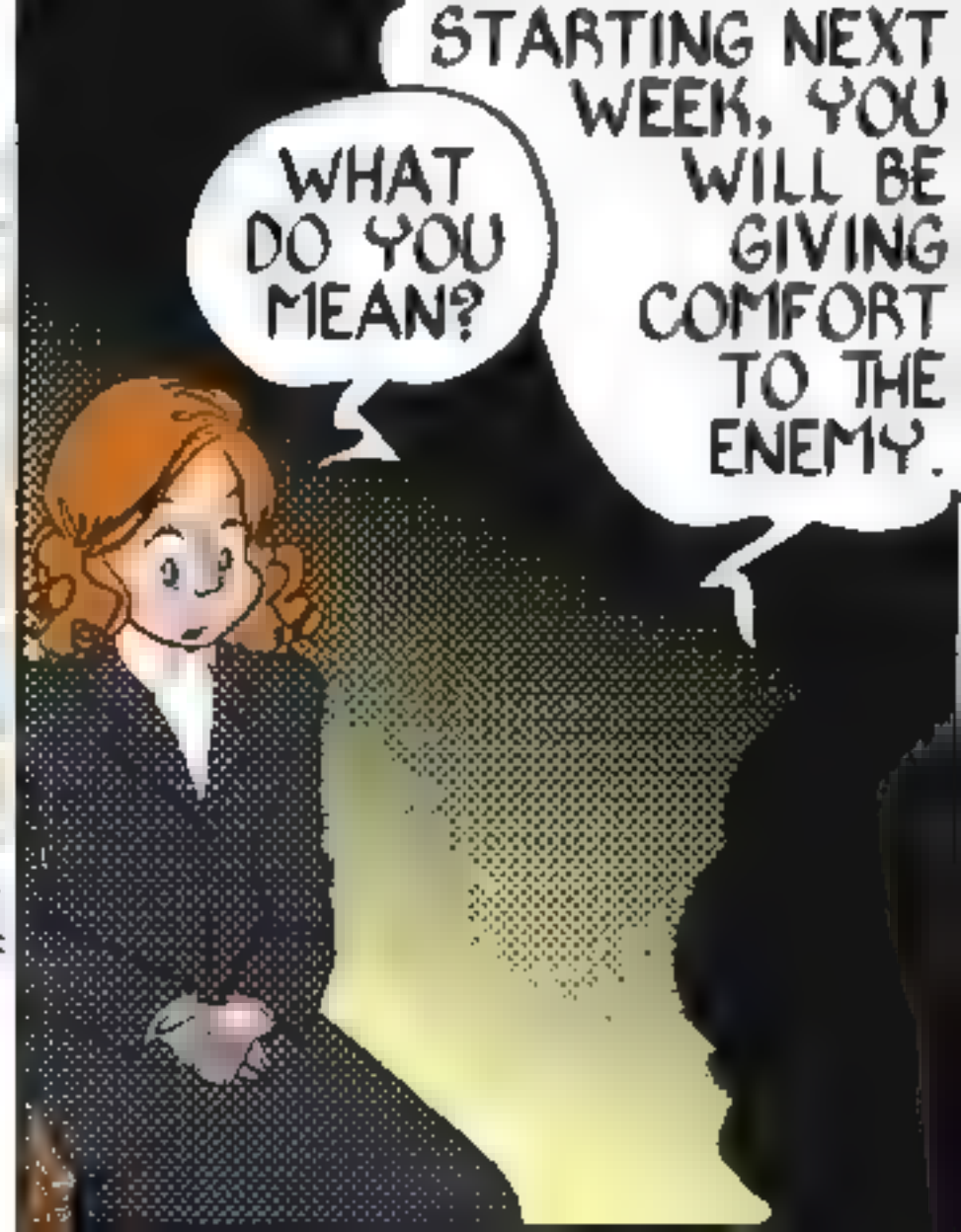
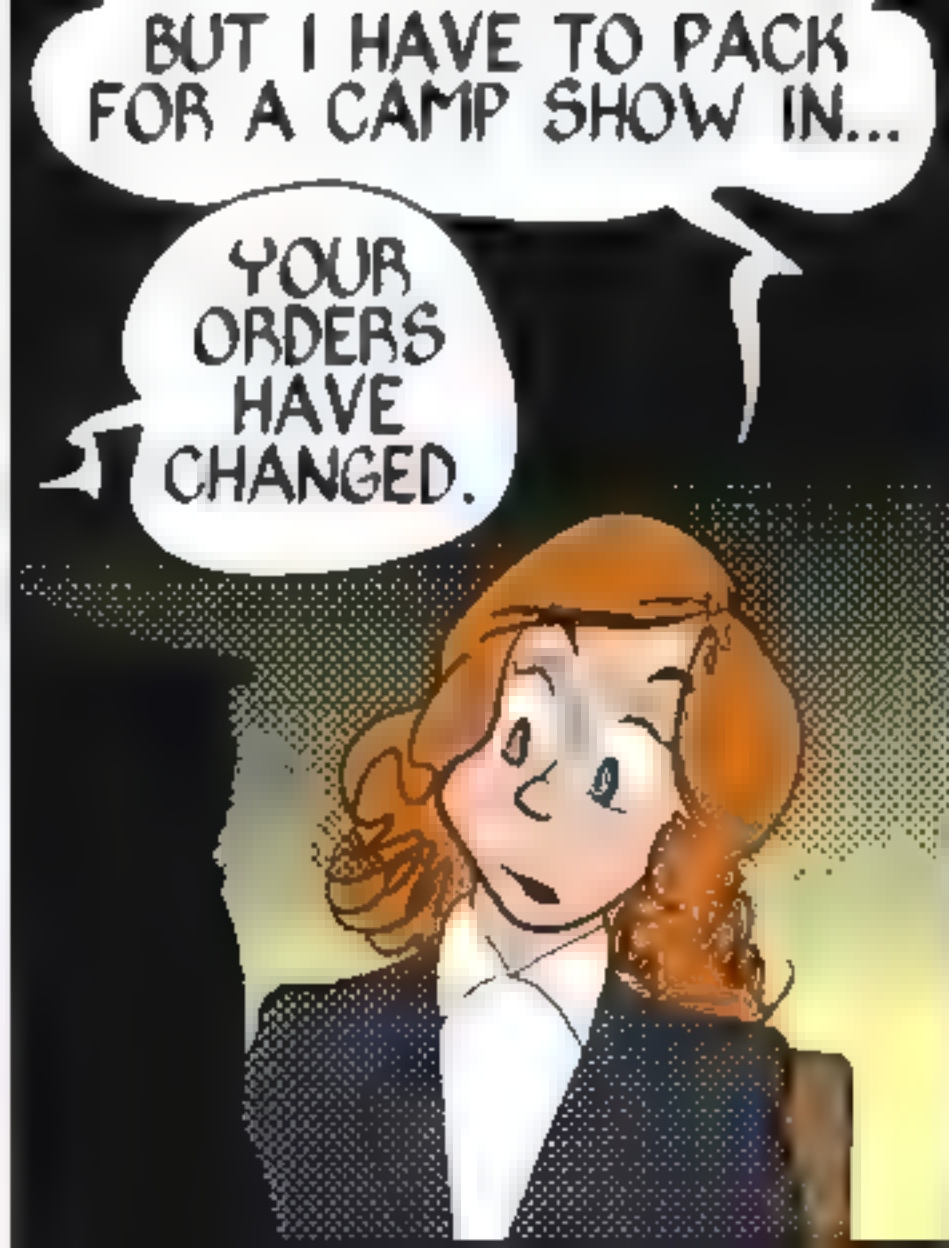


1120

"HE WAS A COLONEL...  
I DON'T REMEMBER HIS  
NAME. HE POLITELY  
ASKED ME TO SIT  
DOWN, THEN SAID,  
'I UNDERSTAND  
YOU CAN SPEAK  
GERMAN'."









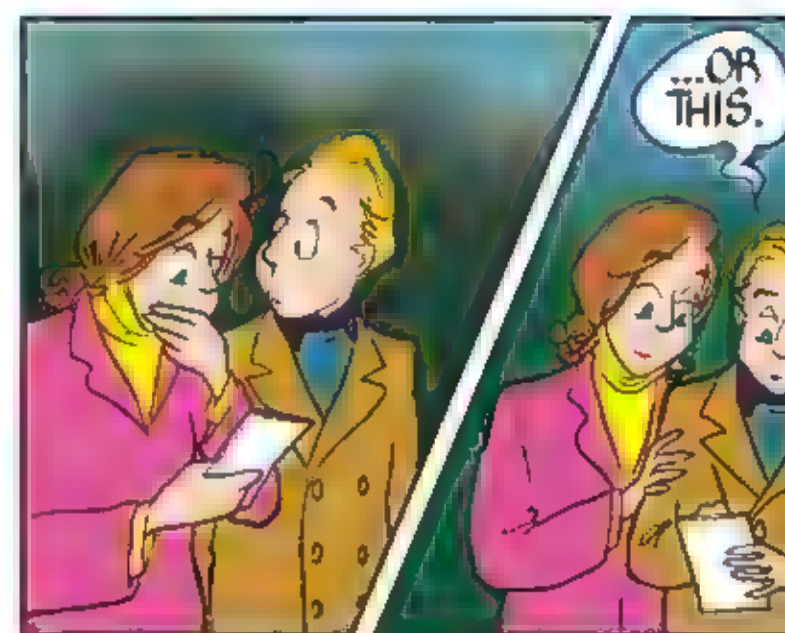
# 9 CHICKWEED LANE



WHEN WE MET...YOU IN YOUR NUN'S HABIT, I IN MY PRIESTLY GARB...IT WAS BUT A FEW DAYS FOR ME TO REALIZE I WAS IN LOVE WITH YOU. AND YET, I WAS CON-  
STRAINED FROM EXPRES-  
SING MY FEELINGS...



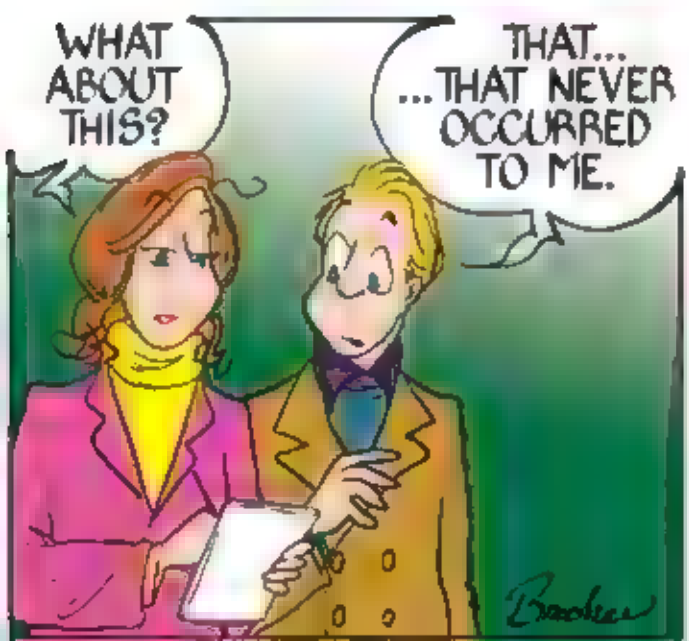
...EXCEPT WITH THE TOUCH OF MY HAND ON YOURS. THOUGH I MIGHT HAVE DESIRED IT, I COULD NOT HAVE DONE, FOR INSTANCE, THIS...



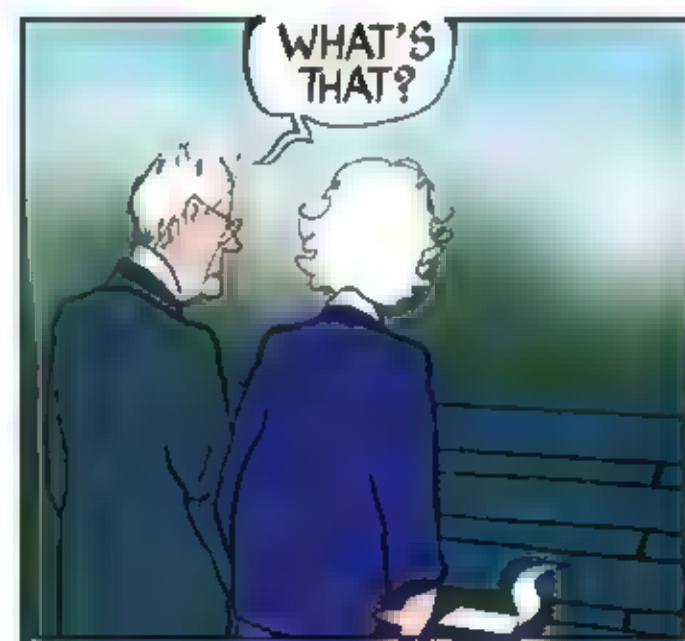
OR THIS...OR IN PARTICULAR THIS...CERTAINLY NOT THIS...AND MOST DEFINITELY NOT THIS.



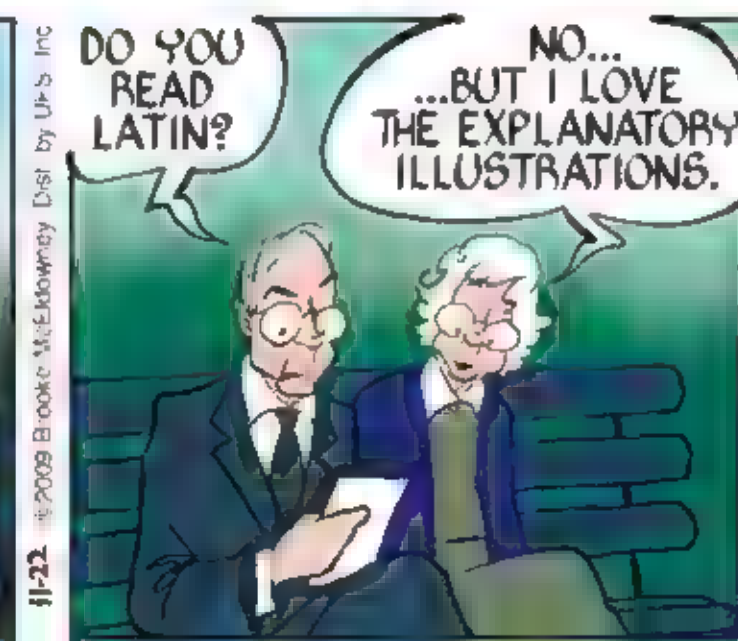
WHAT ABOUT THIS? THAT...  
...THAT NEVER OCCURRED TO ME.



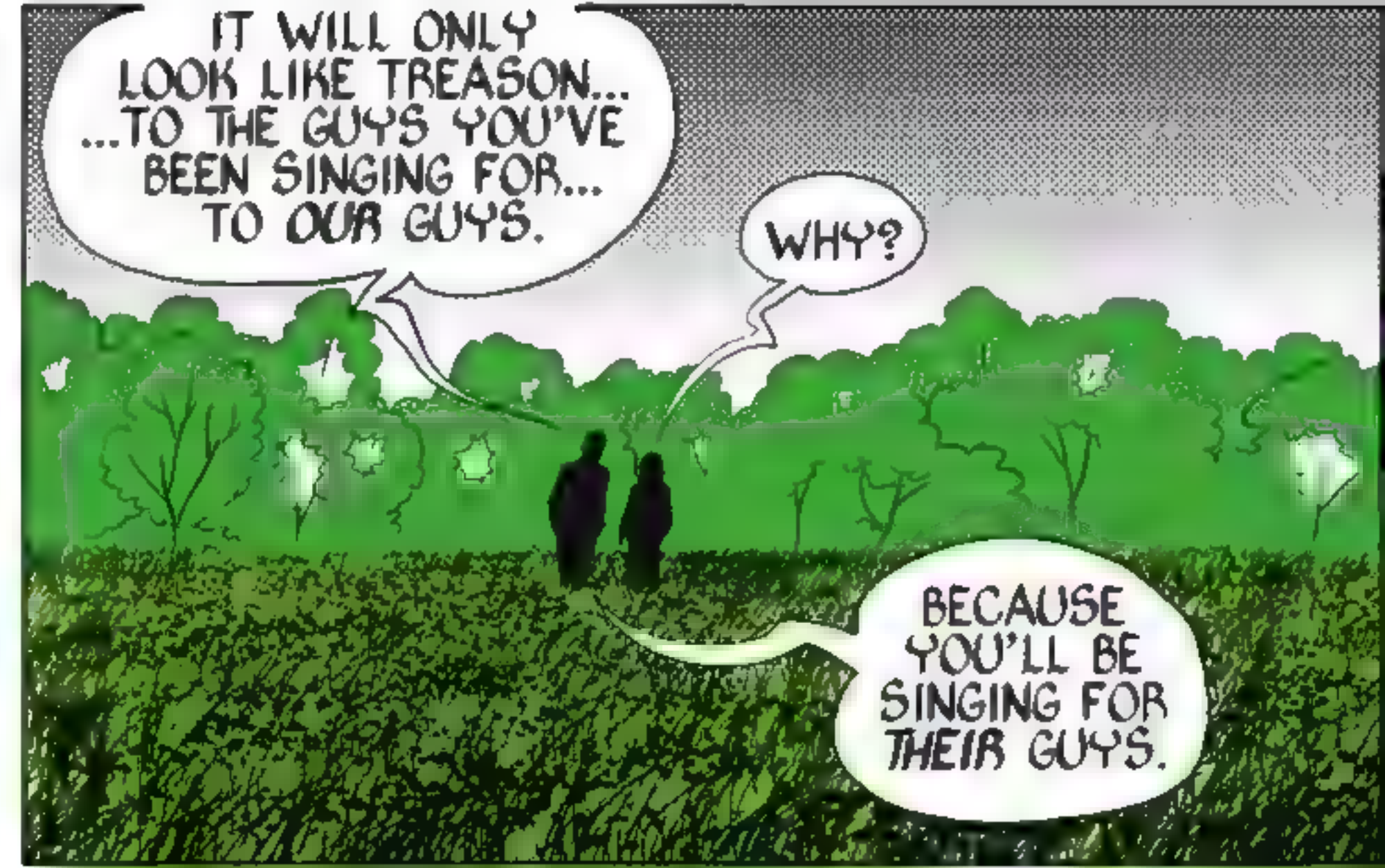
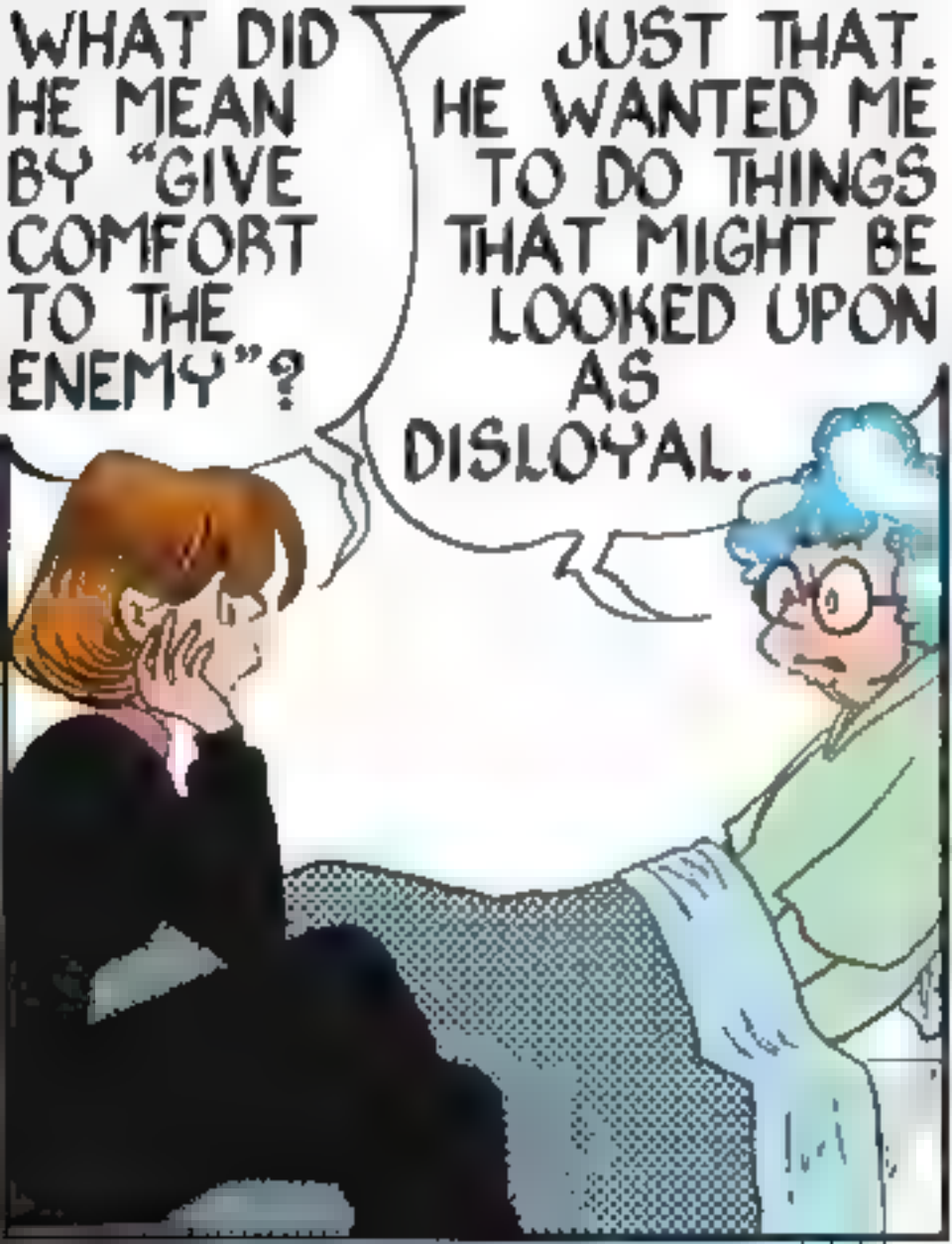
WHAT'S THAT?



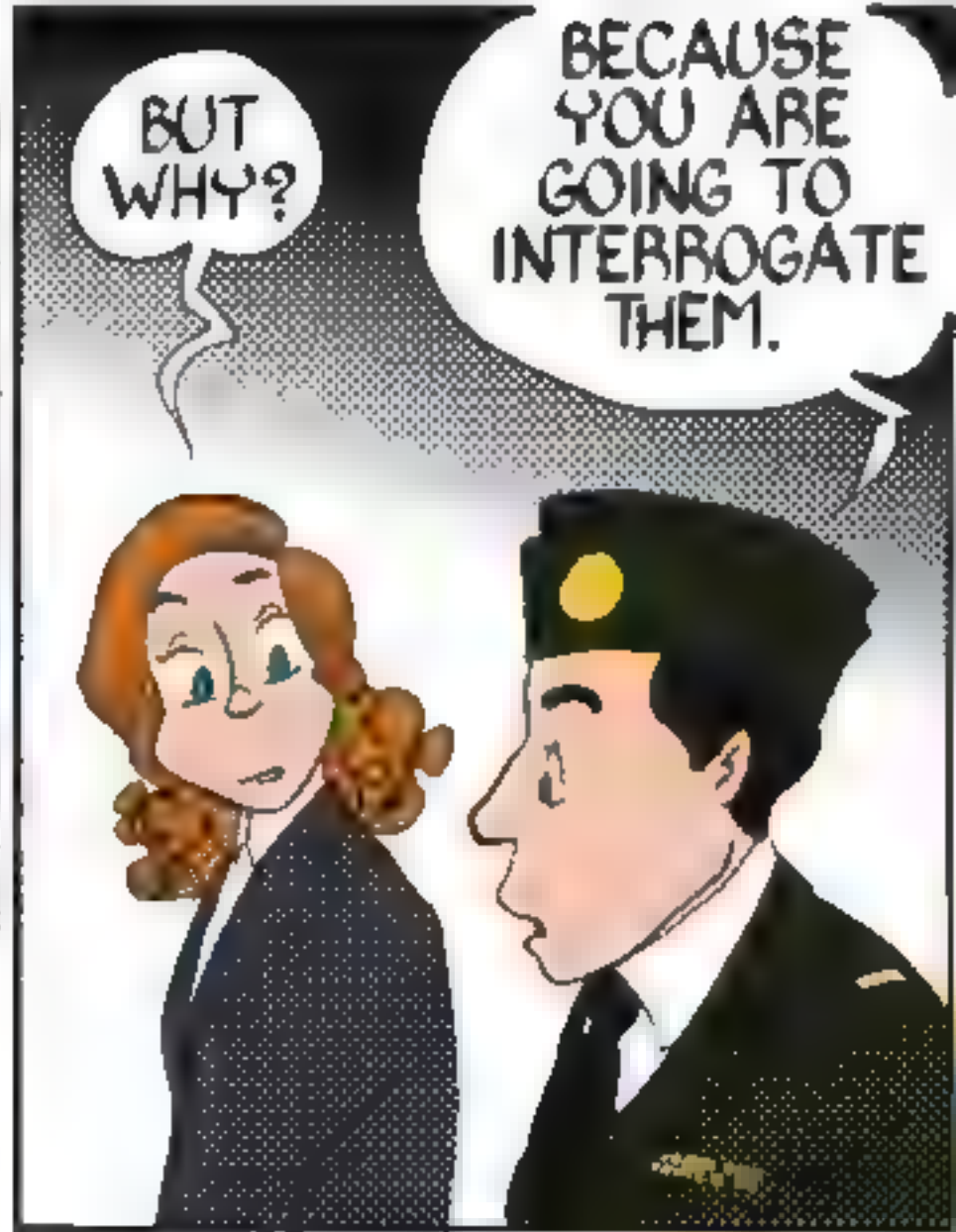
DO YOU READ LATIN? NO...  
...BUT I LOVE THE EXPLANATORY ILLUSTRATIONS.













I'M JUST A SINGER. I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT INTERROGATING PEOPLE.

YOU DO IT AT EVERY CAMP SHOW. I'VE WATCHED YOU.

THOSE GUYS HOLD YOUR HANDS AFTER A SHOW AND YOU CHAT WITH THEM...  
...AND SUDDENLY YOU'RE THEIR HIGH SCHOOL SWEET-HEART...AND THEY START TALKING ABOUT EVERYTHING BACK HOME. THEY TELL YOU LOADS OF INFORMATION, AND ALL BECAUSE YOU SMILE AND LOOK UNTOUCHED AND PURE.

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ARE YOU, BY THE WAY?

...ARE YOU UNTOUCHED AND PURE?



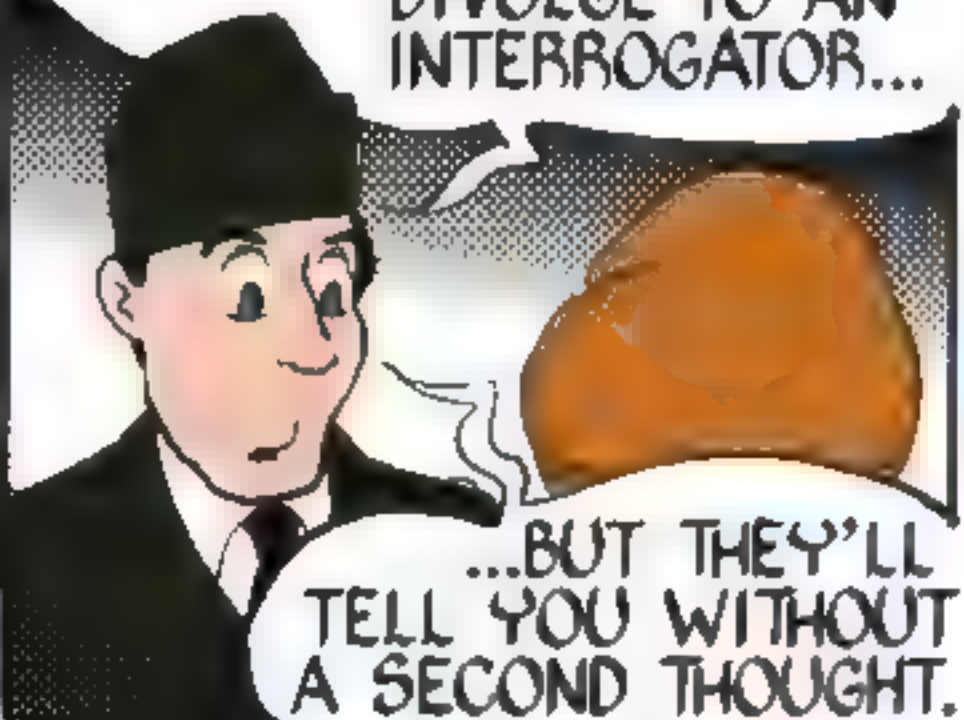
Brooke







THE THING IS, WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE GERMAN SOLDIERS AND SAILORS SAY TO YOU...ABOUT HOME, ABOUT PLACES, WHAT THEY DO AND WHERE. THIS IS ALL INFORMATION THEY WON'T DIVULGE TO AN INTERROGATOR...



...BUT THEY'LL TELL YOU WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT.

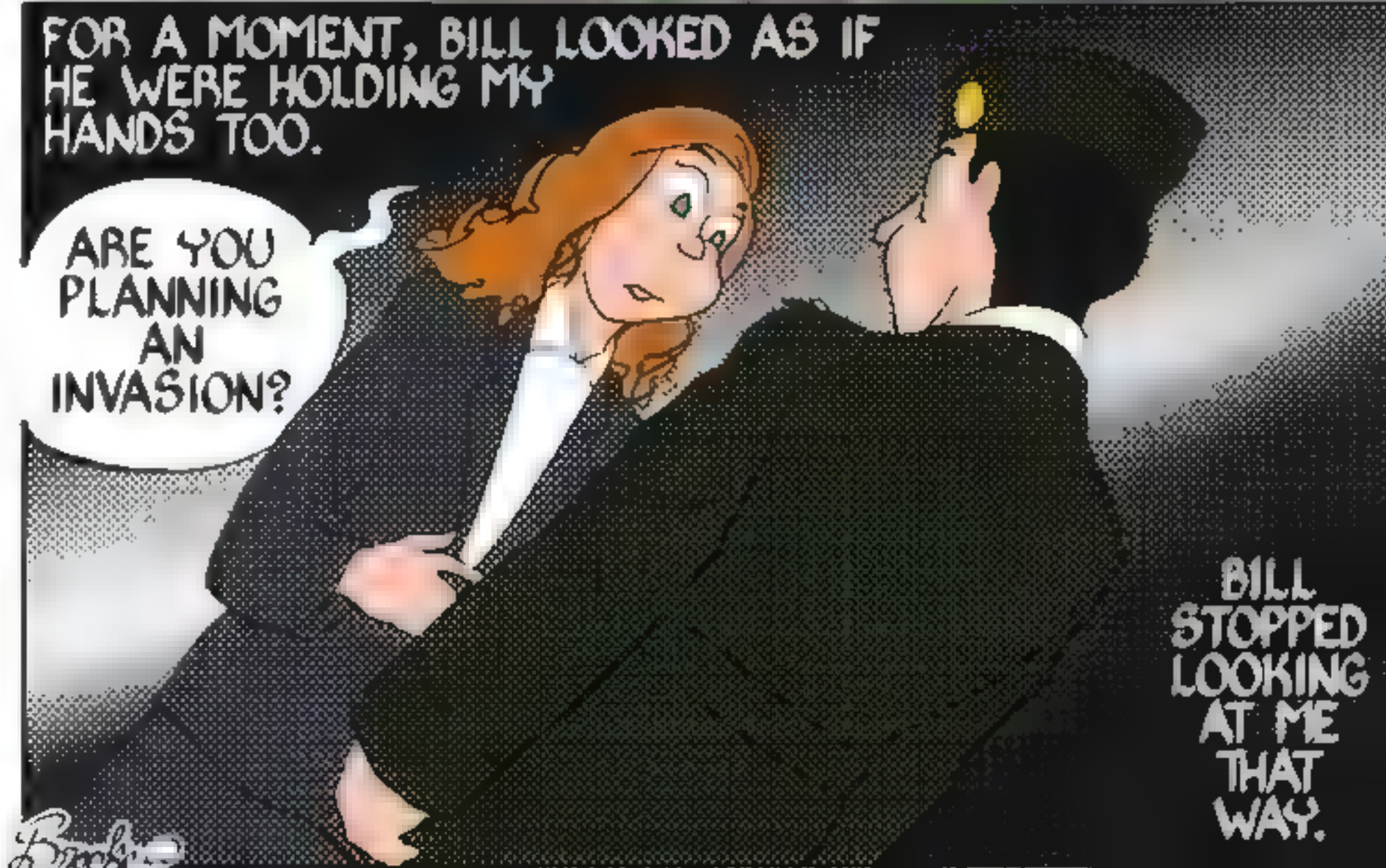
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THEN WE WANT YOU TO REPEAT TO US WHAT THEY TOLD YOU WHILE THEY WERE HOLDING YOUR HANDS. WE'LL DECIDE IF THE INFORMATION IS OF ANY USE TO US.



FOR A MOMENT, BILL LOOKED AS IF HE WERE HOLDING MY HANDS TOO.

ARE YOU PLANNING AN INVASION?



BILL STOPPED LOOKING AT ME THAT WAY.

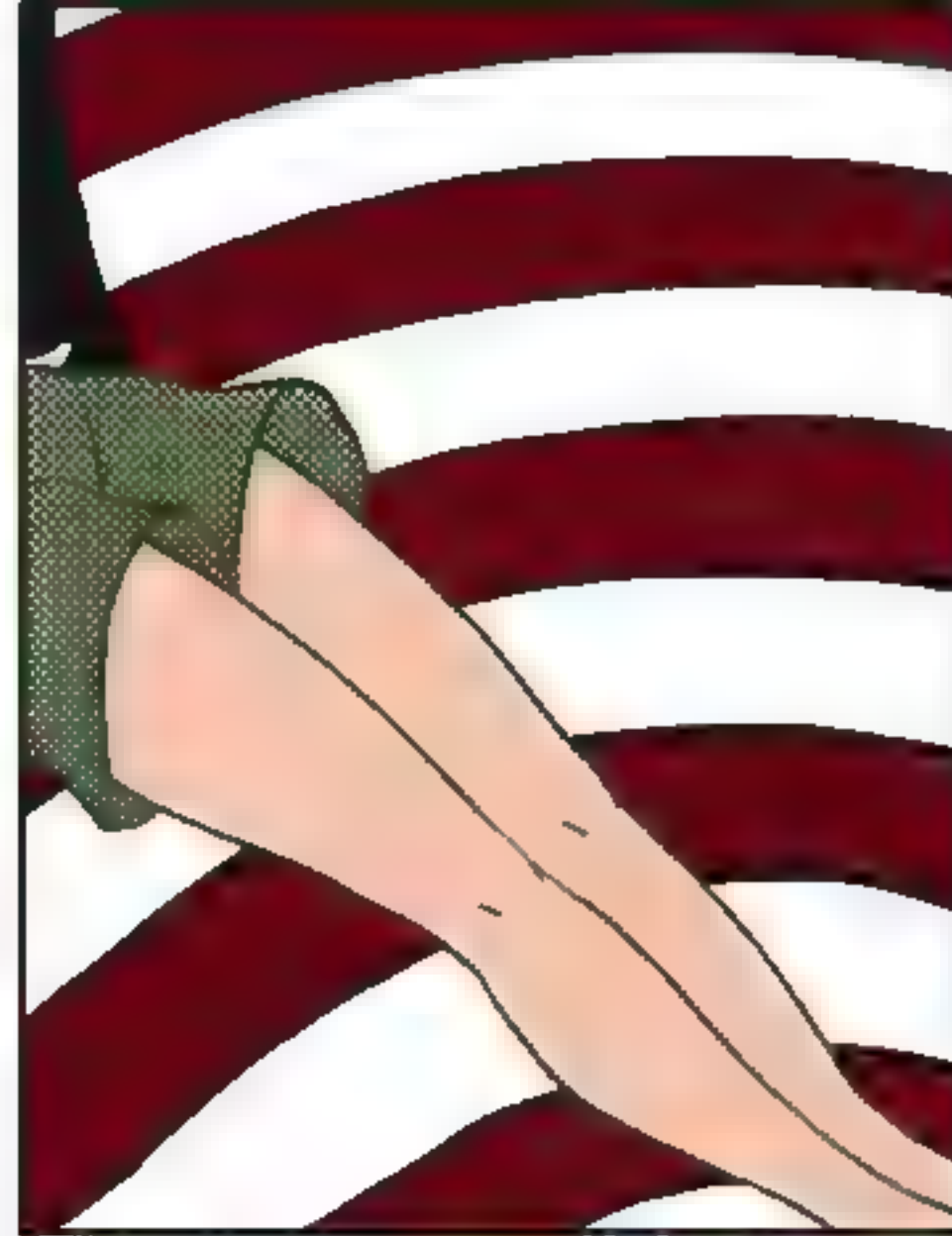


YOU SING FOR OUR  
SERVICEMEN BECAUSE  
YOU'RE A PATRIOT...  
...AND THEY LOVE  
YOU.



11-28

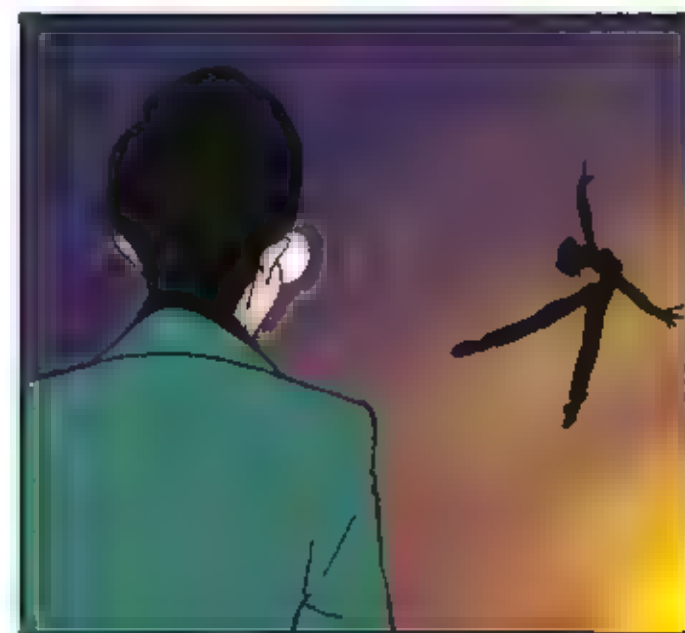
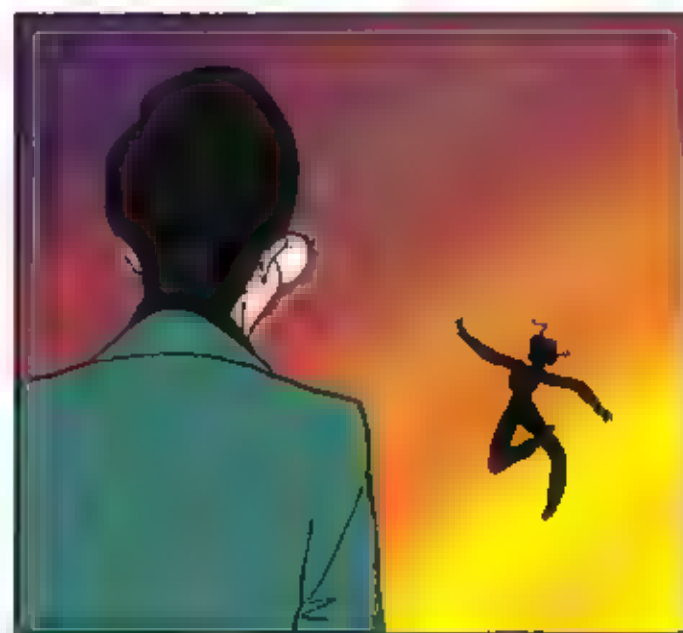
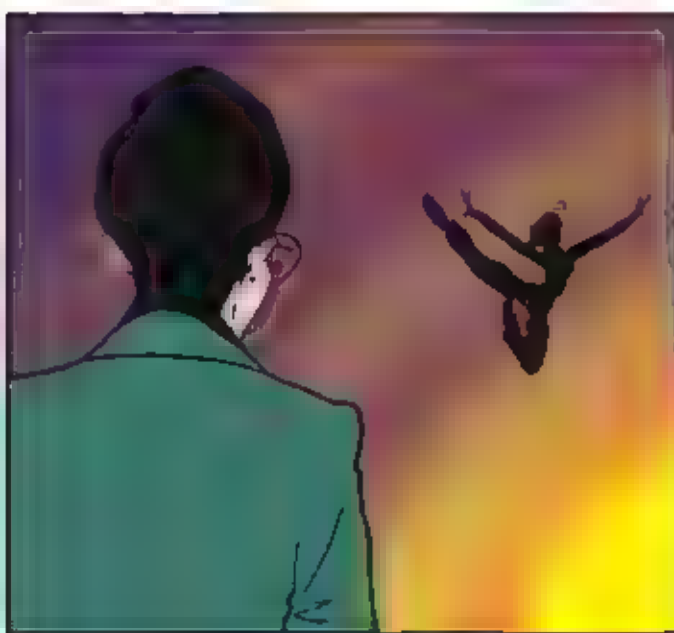
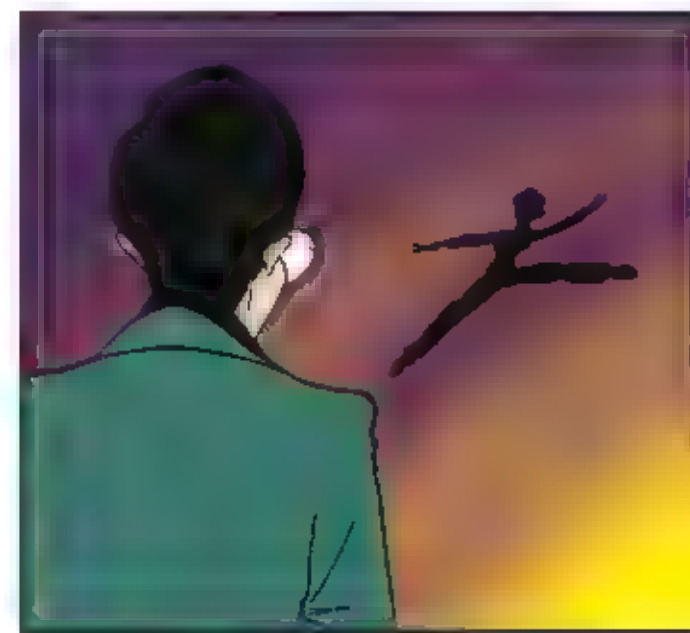
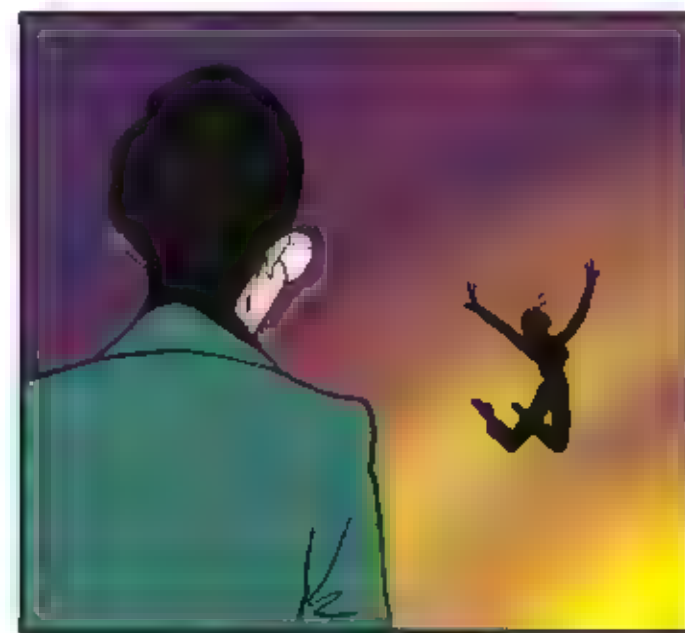
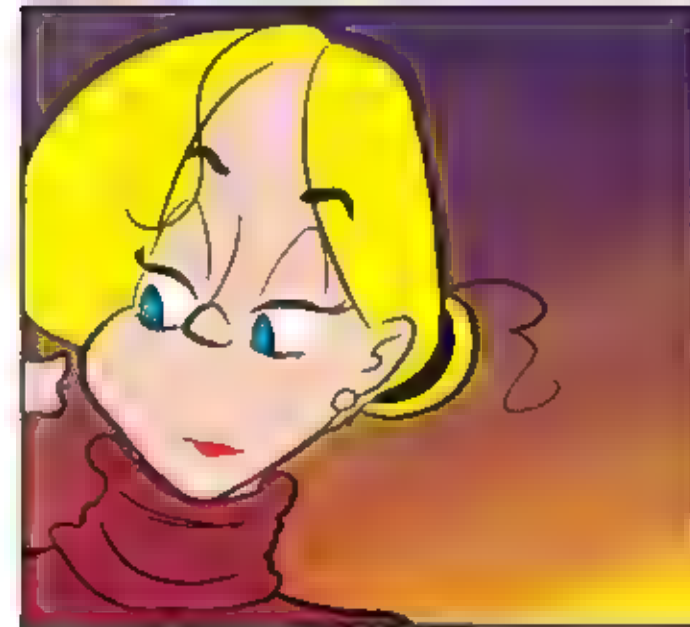
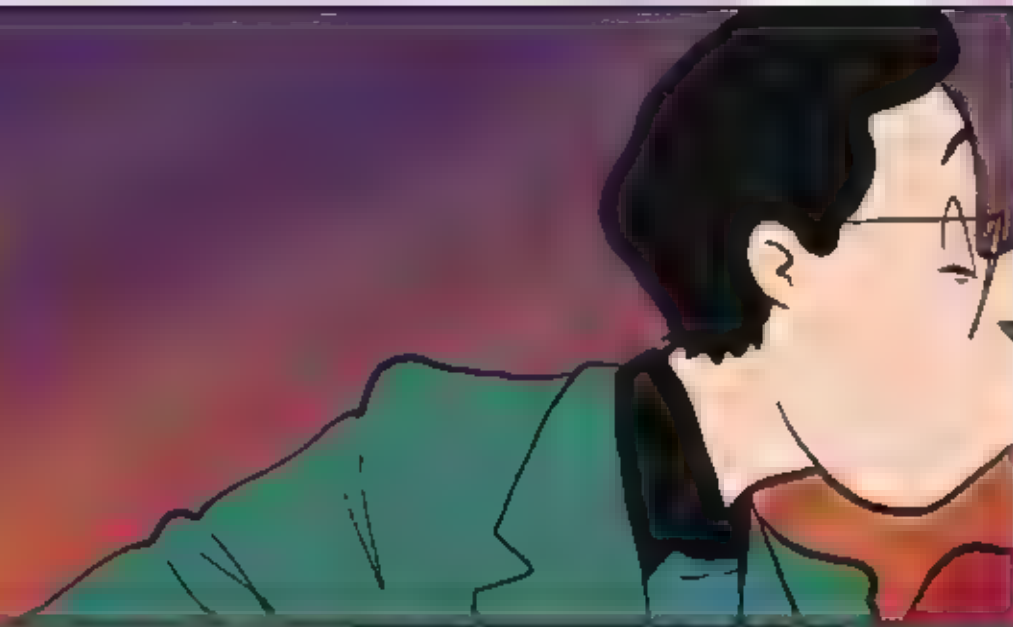
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IF YOU VOLUNTEER FOR  
THIS, YOU'LL SING FOR  
THEIR SERVICEMEN  
BECAUSE YOU'RE A  
PATRIOT...  
...AND OUR  
GUYS MAY  
HATE YOU.

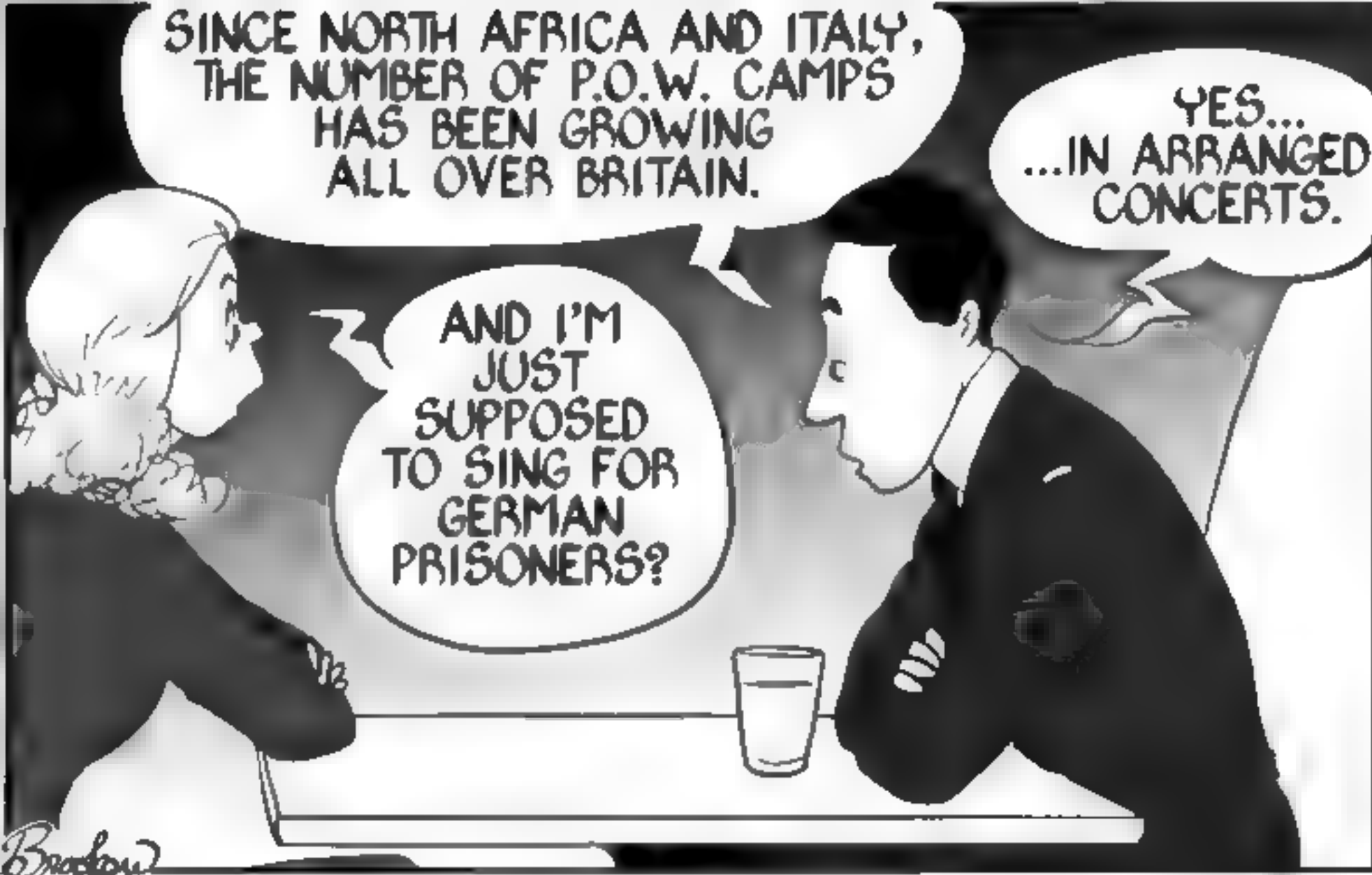


# 9 CHICKWEED LANE











BY THE WAY,  
EDIE ERNST  
WON'T DO.

I BEG  
YOUR  
PARDON?

I BEG  
YOUR  
PARDON?

NOT WITH GERMAN PRISONERS. WE'LL CALL YOU EVA ERNST, IF YOU DON'T MIND.

NO, I GUESS NOT.

NO,  
I GUESS  
NOT.

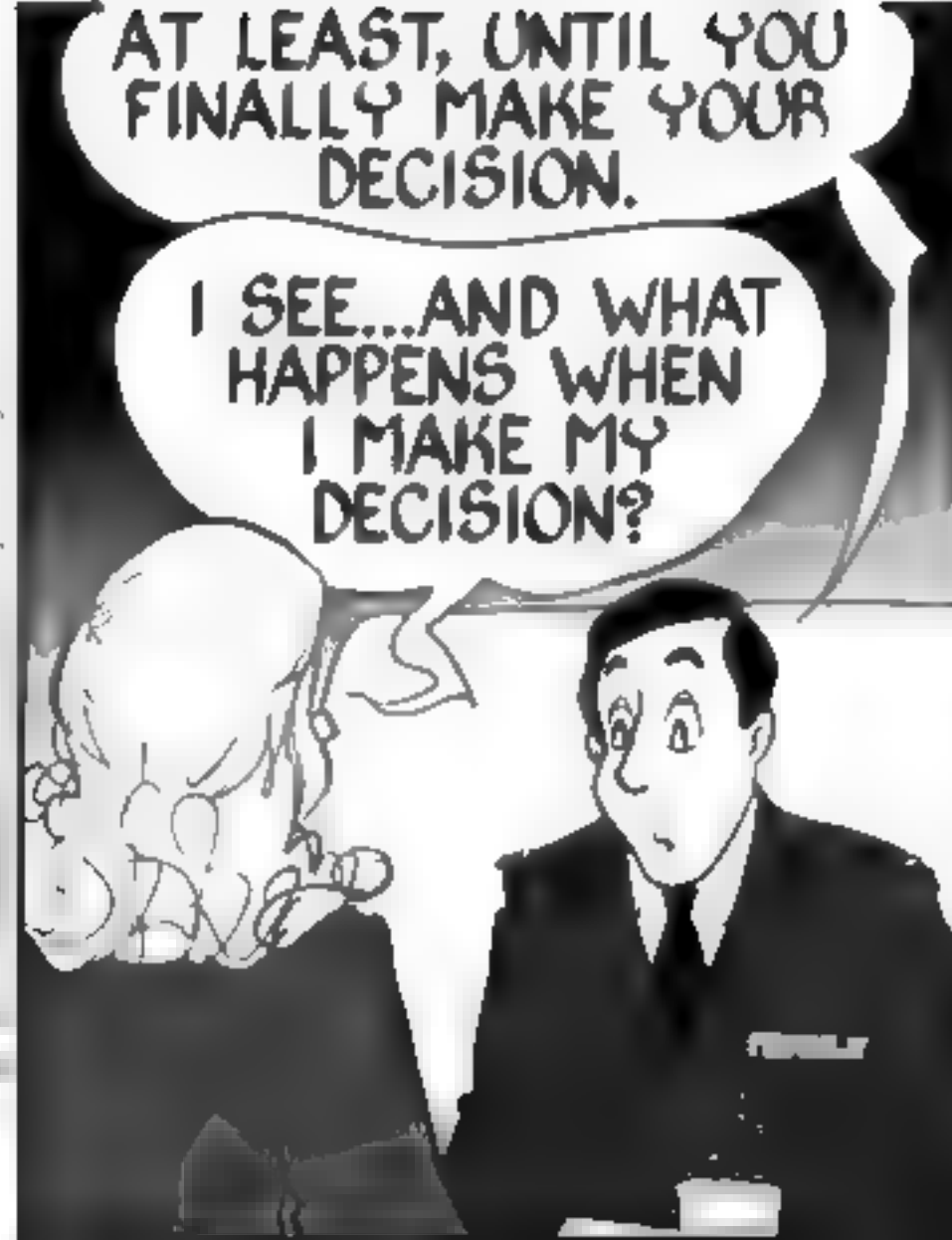
WHAT IS YOUR FULL NAME, LIEUTENANT?

EARL WILLIAM O'MALLEY.

EARL  
WILLIAM  
O'MALLEY.

BUT YOU CAN CALL ME BILL, INASMUCH AS I'M SUPPOSED TO BE IN LOVE WITH YOU.

Bohner



WILL I STILL BE ABLE  
TO SING FOR OUR BOYS  
IF I VOLUNTEER FOR  
THIS JOB?

I DON'T KNOW.  
...I'LL SEE WHAT  
I CAN DO.

I NEED YOU  
TO PROMISE.

*Brooks*

YOU REALIZE, AS A MILITARY  
INTELLIGENCE OFFICER I CAN PROMISE  
ANYTHING THEN WELCH ON IT.

WHAT ABOUT  
AS THE GUY  
WHO'S IN LOVE  
WITH ME?

...I  
PROMISE.





# 9 CHICKWEED LANE

®

WITHIN HALF AN HOUR  
OF COMING HOME FOR  
A VISIT, EDDA'S HAD  
A TIFF WITH JULIETTE.

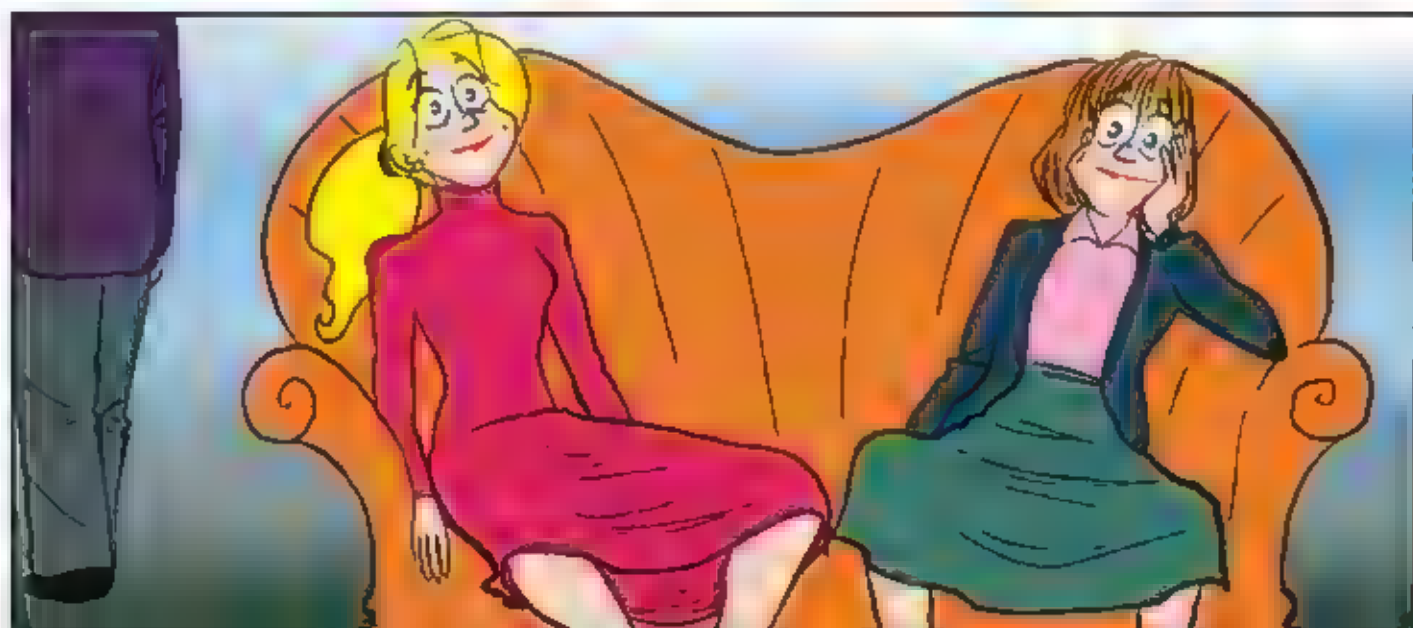
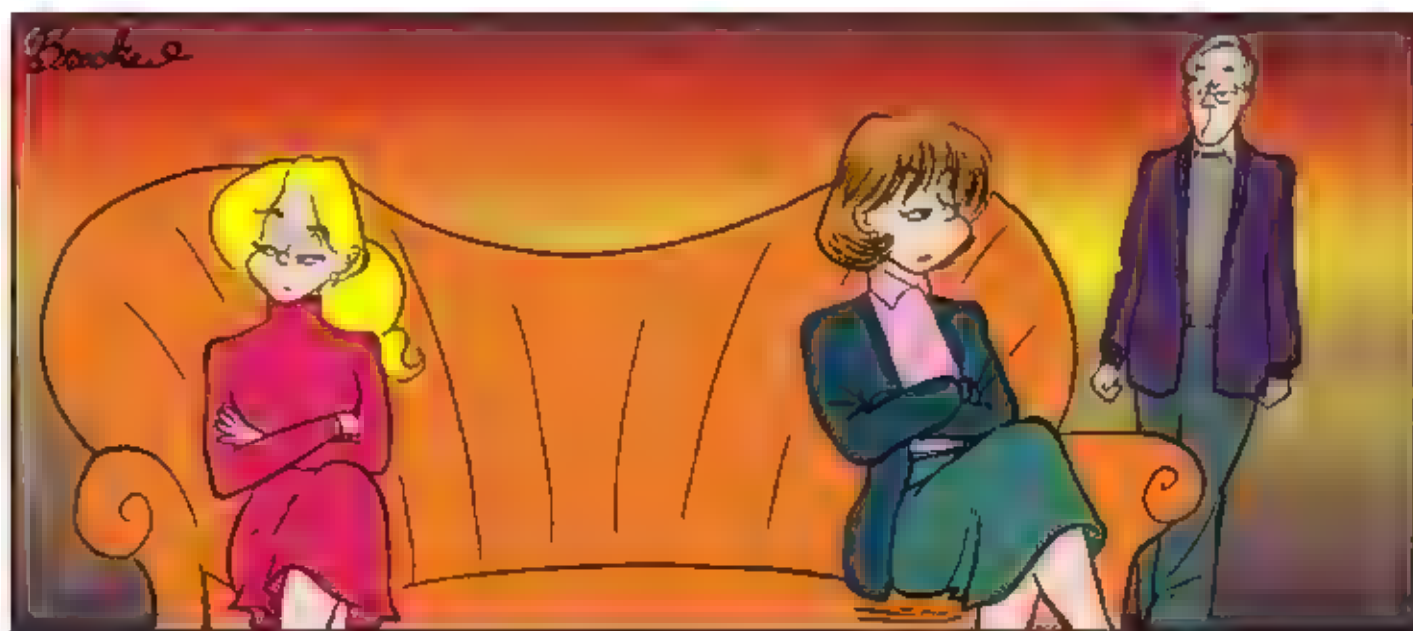
THEY'RE BOTH  
JUST SITTING  
THERE  
IN  
STONY  
SILENCE.

THIS  
REQUIRES  
EXPERT  
DEFUSING  
SKILL.

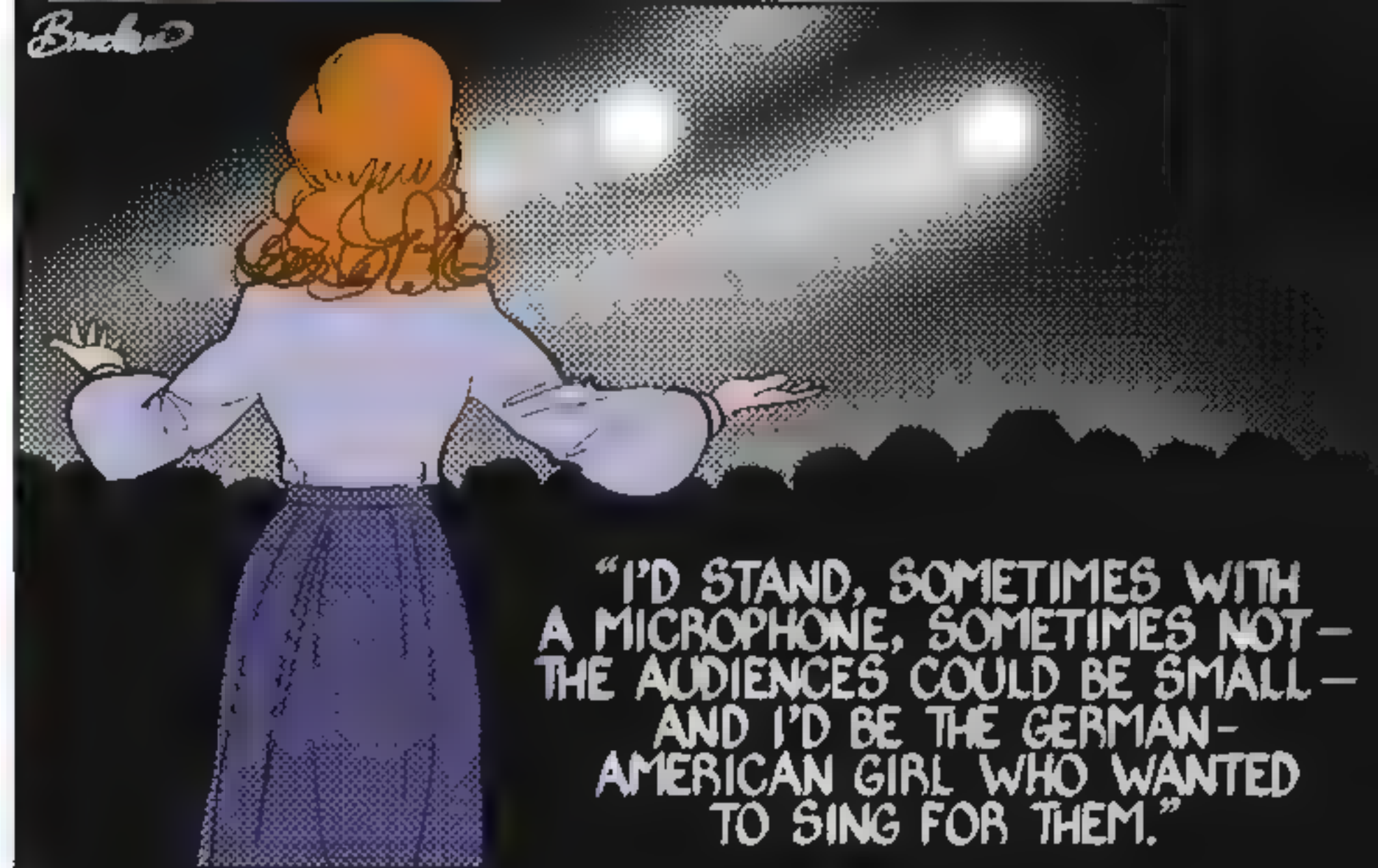
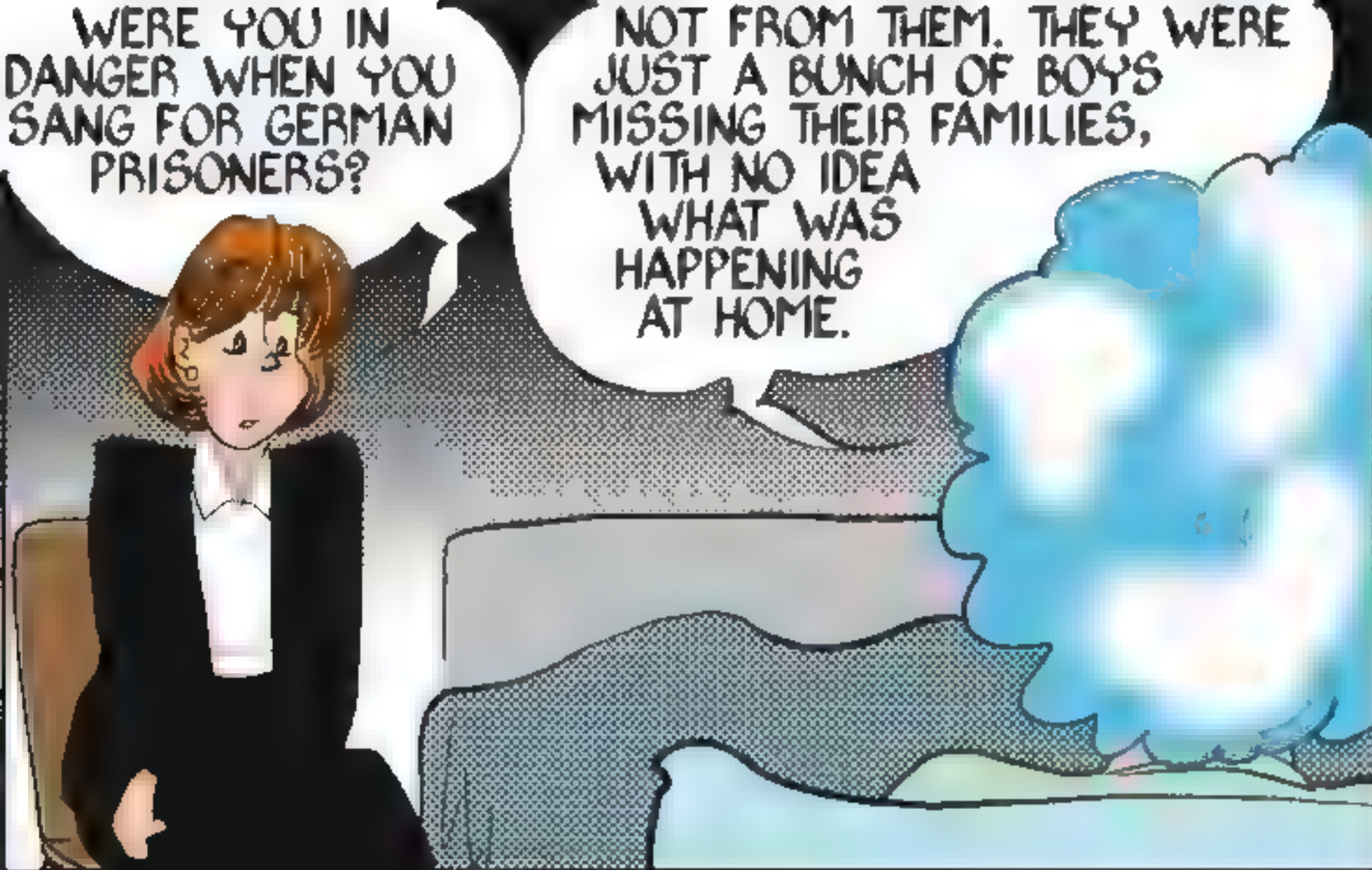
CLARK GABLE IN  
"IT HAPPENED  
ONE NIGHT."

CARY GRANT IN  
"CHARADE."

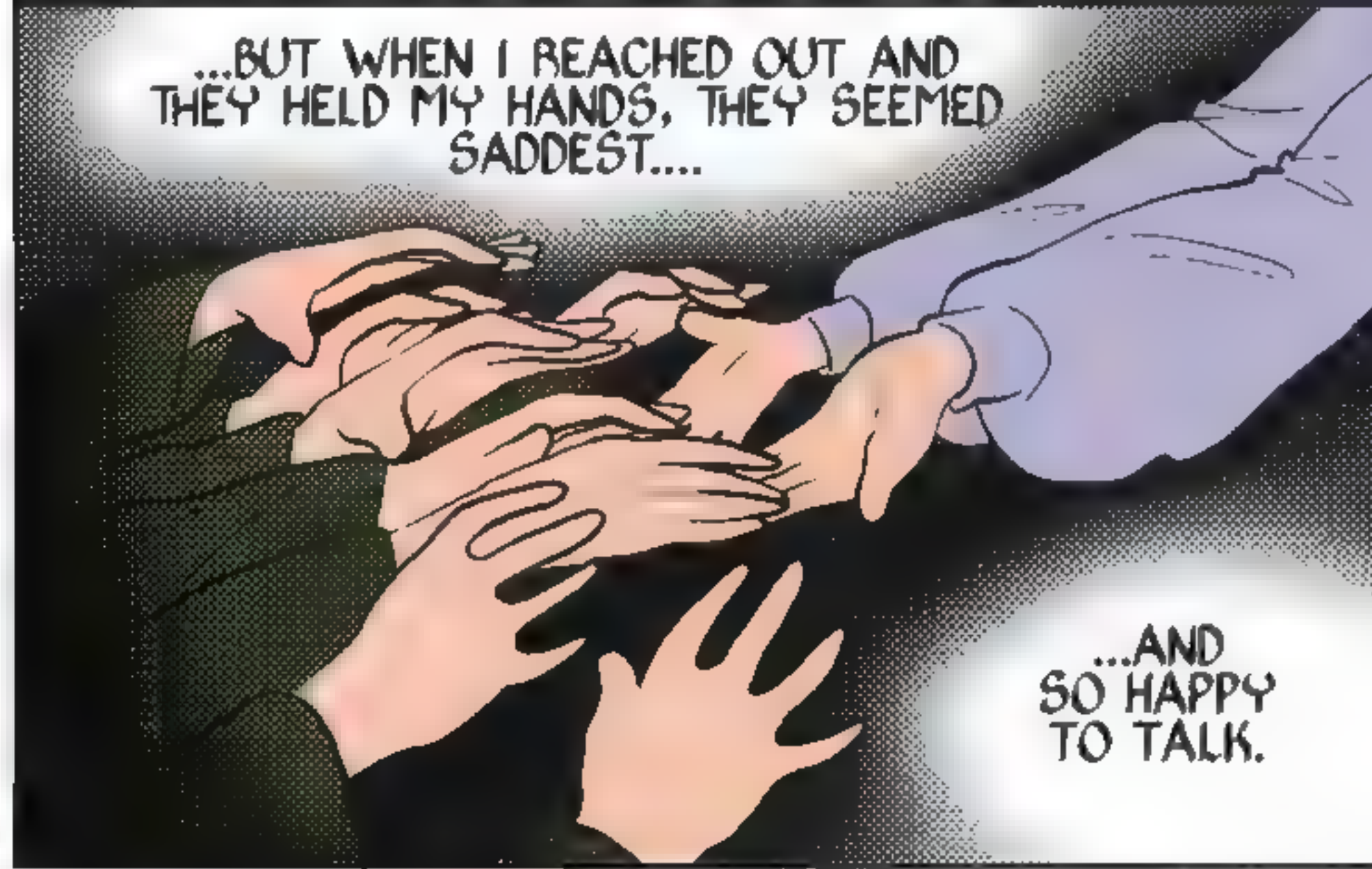
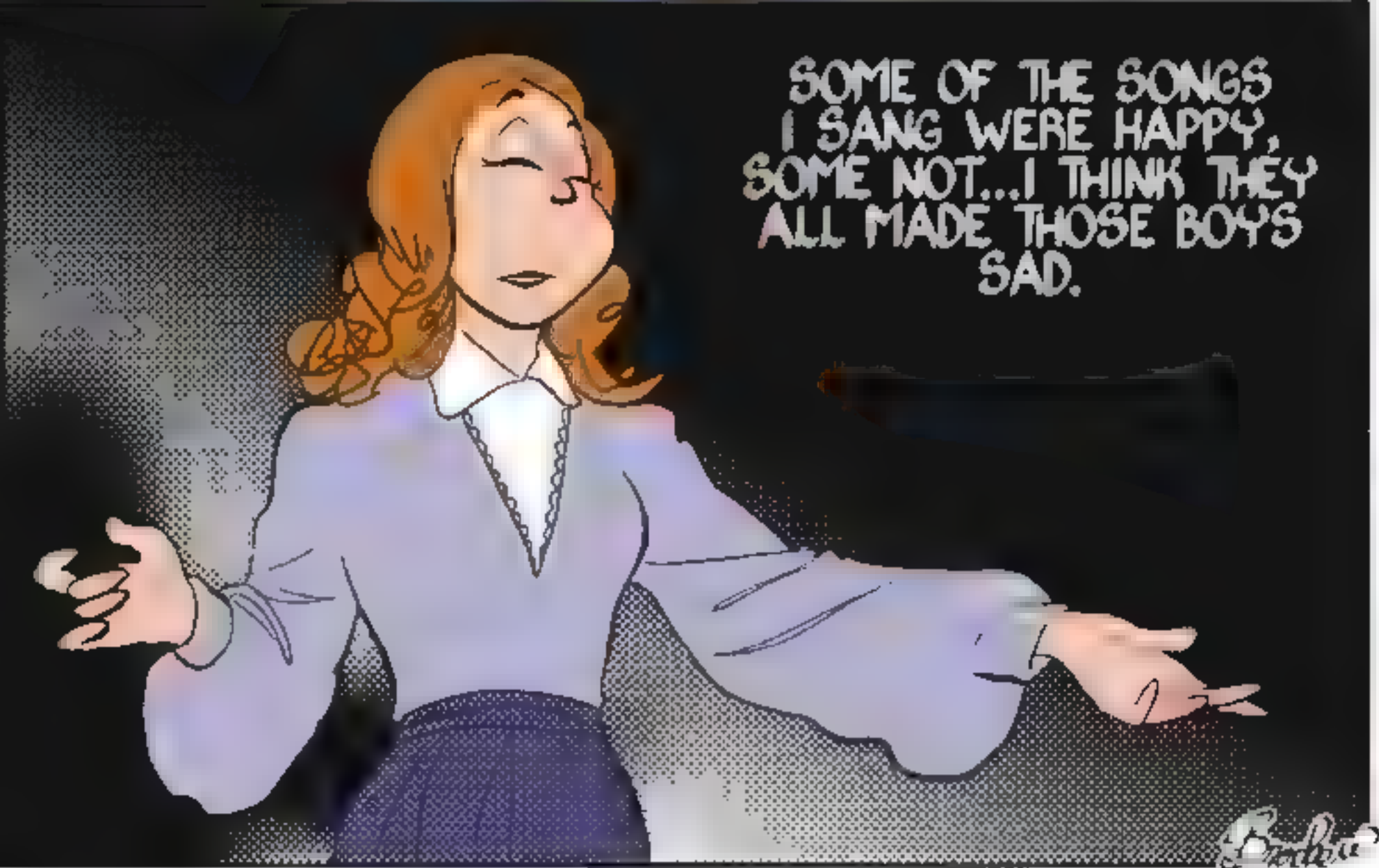
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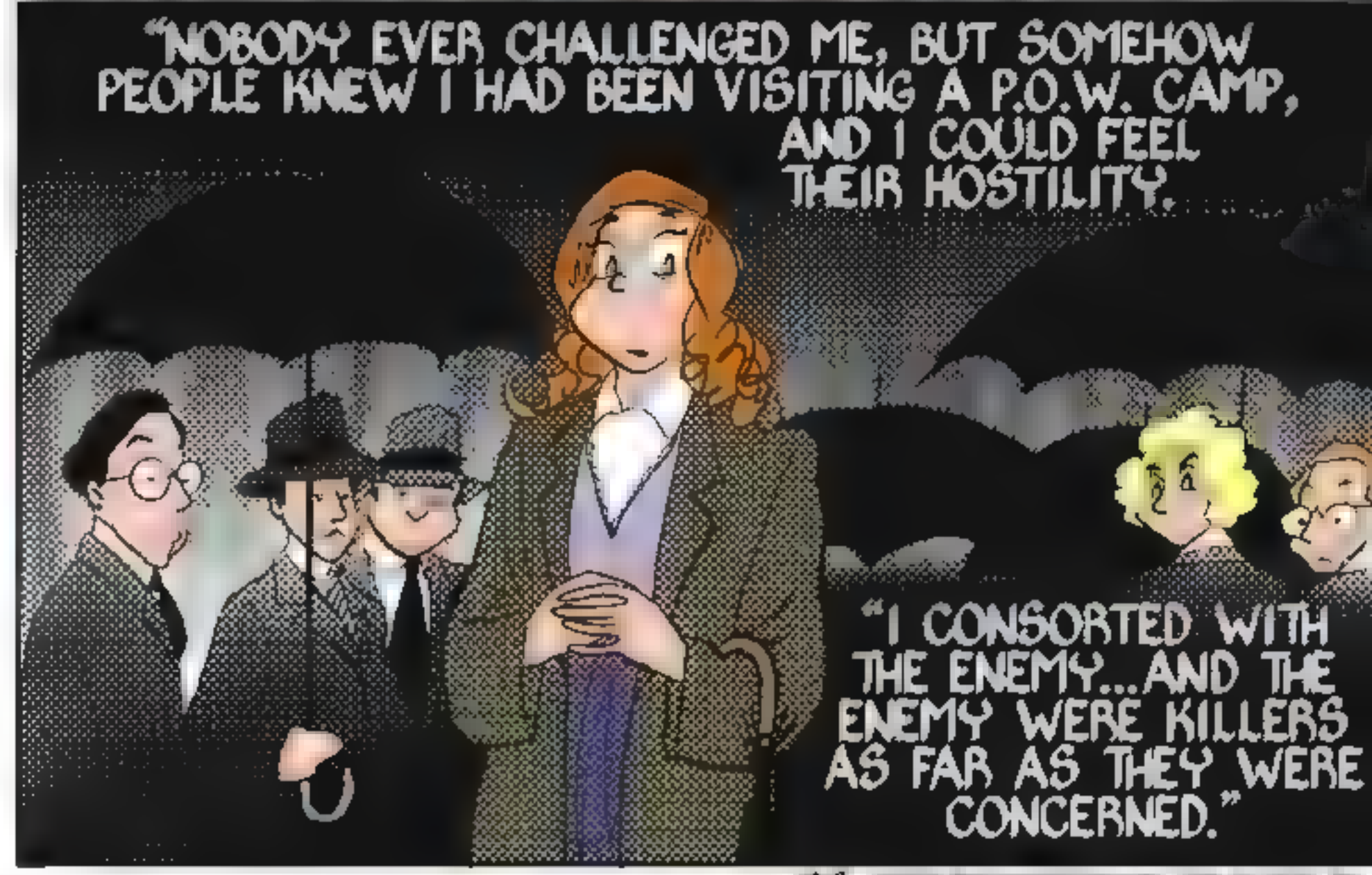












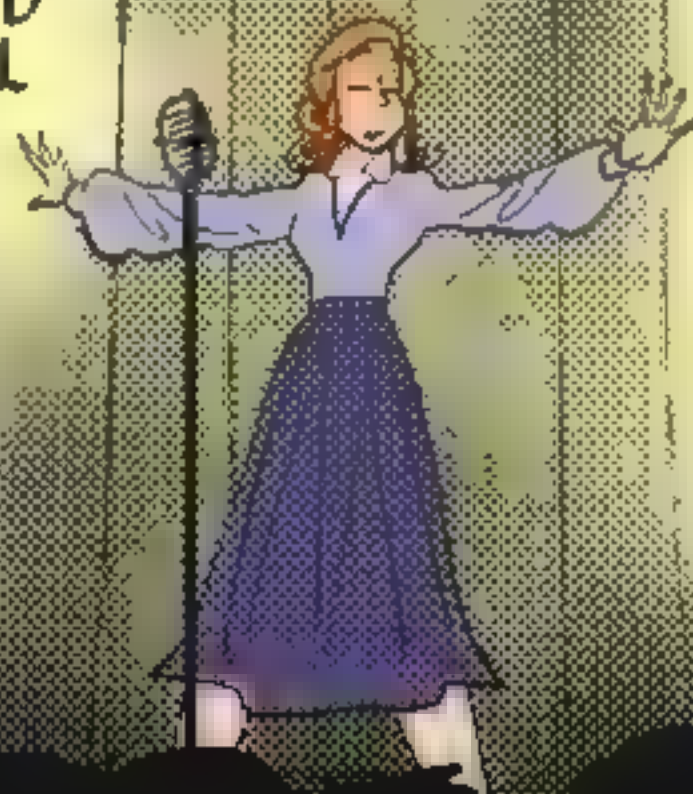


"THERE WAS ALSO  
THE PROBLEM WITH  
BEING A YANK.  
AMERICANS GOT  
A REPUTATION FOR  
ARROGANCE WHEN  
WE ENTERED  
THE WAR.



"WE STRODE  
IN AMONG  
A POPULATION  
THAT HAD BEEN  
FRUSTRATED  
AND BATTERED  
FOR YEARS...

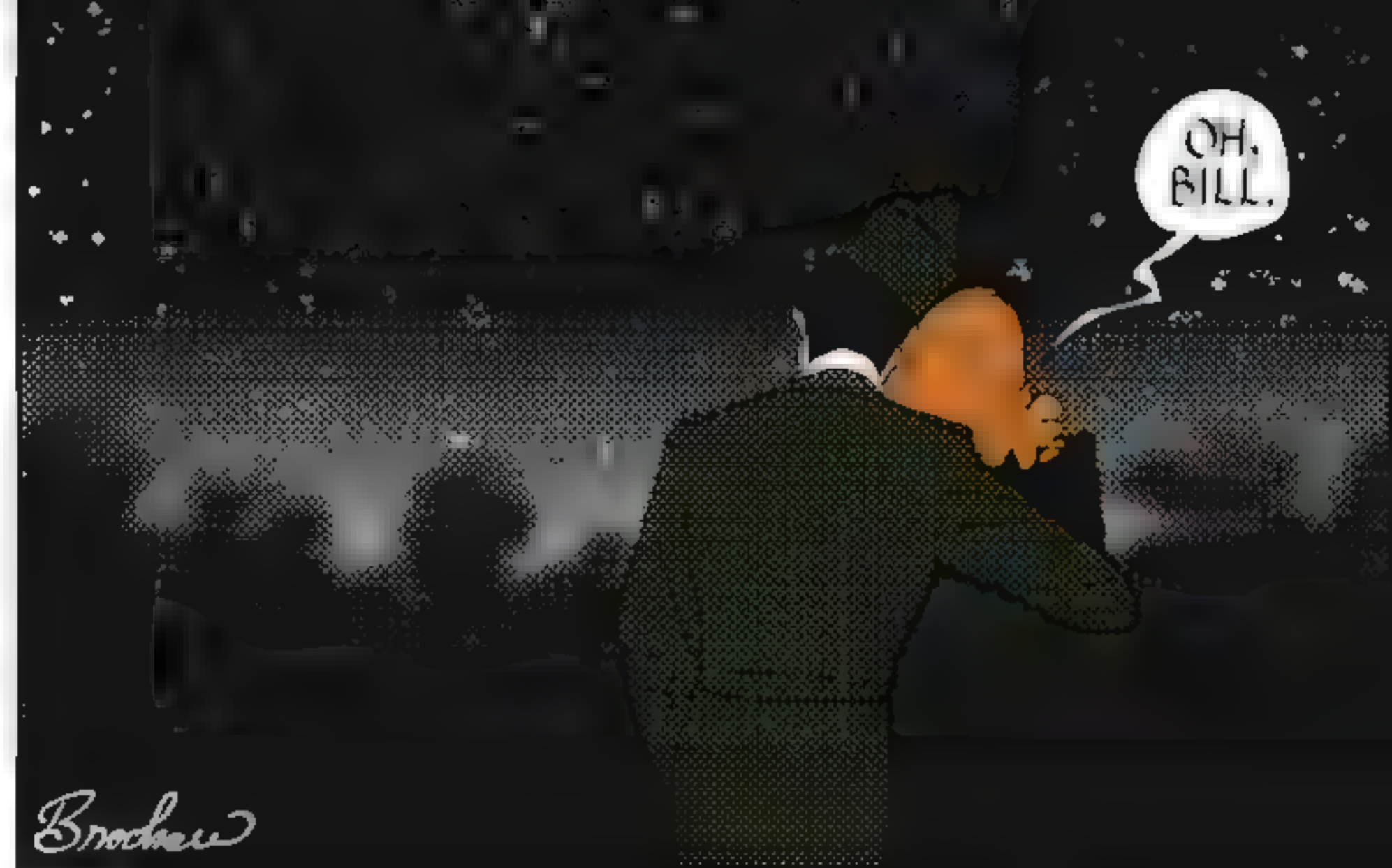
"AND THEY  
QUICKLY  
HATED US MORE  
THAN THEY DID  
THEIR ACTUAL  
ENEMY.



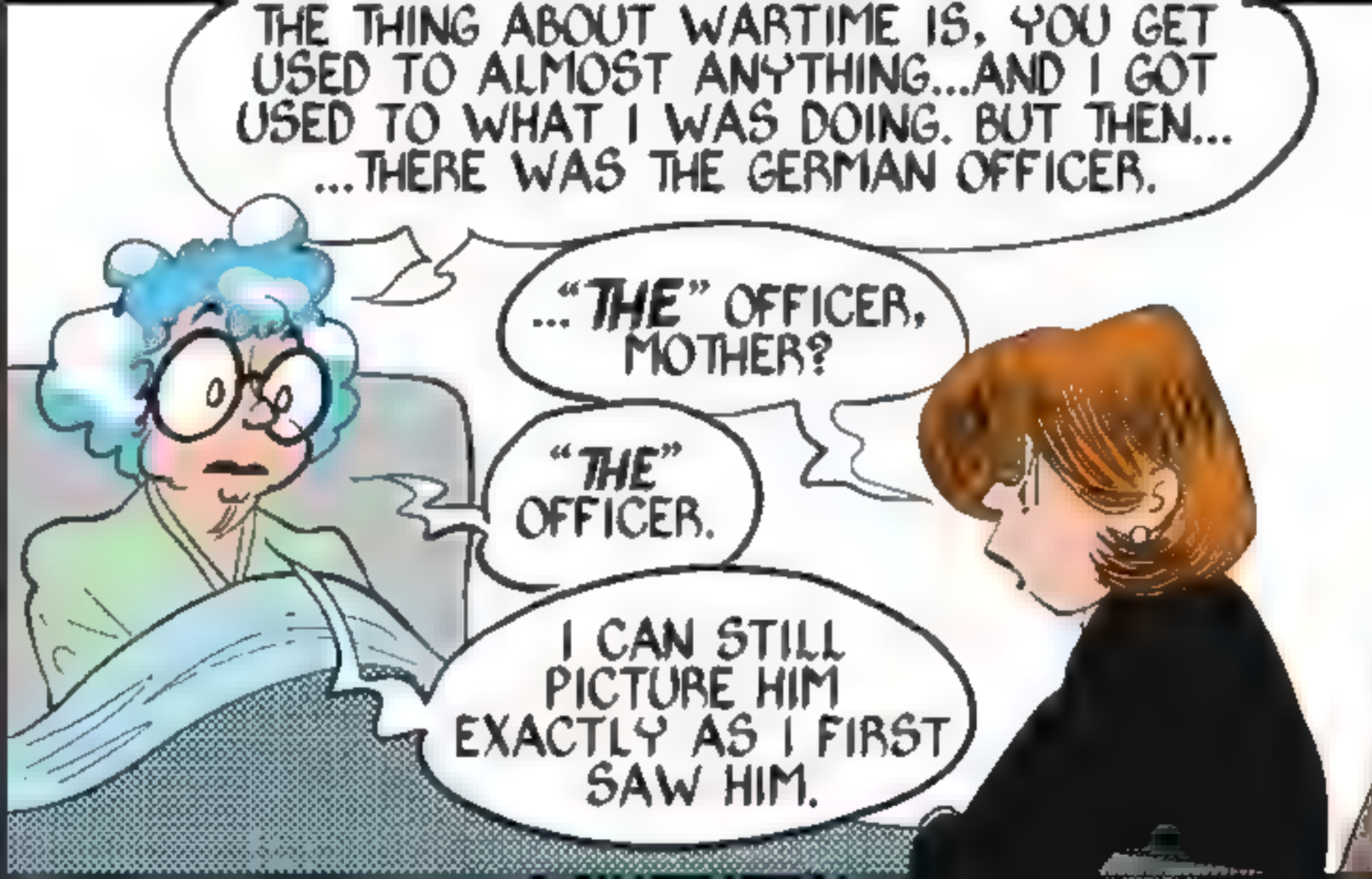
"SO THEN I SHOWED  
UP, GLIDING INTO  
AND OUT OF P.O.W.  
CAMPS TO SING  
TO GERMANS.  
I BEGAN TO WONDER  
WHOSE ALLY  
I REALLY WAS.  
AND I COULDN'T  
EXPLAIN IT  
TO ANYBODY."

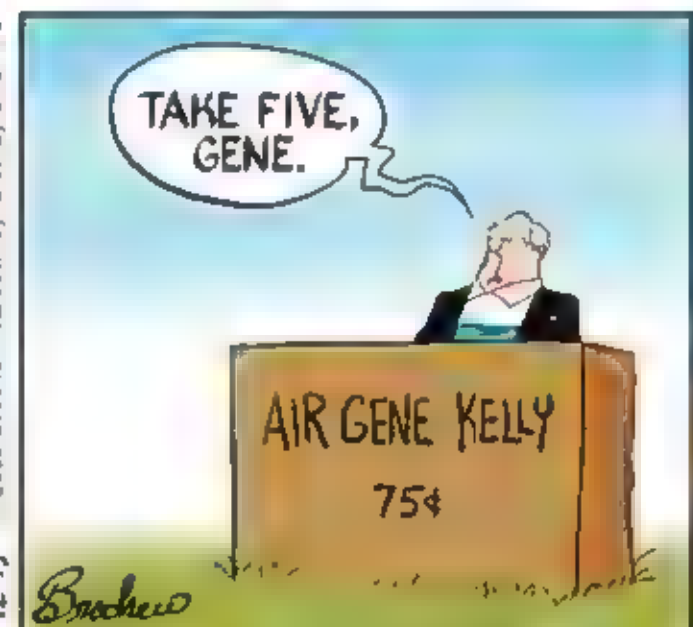
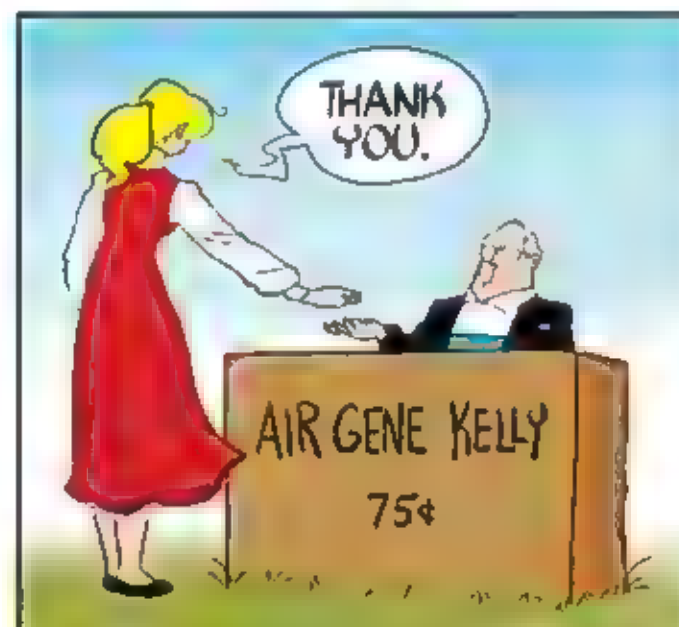
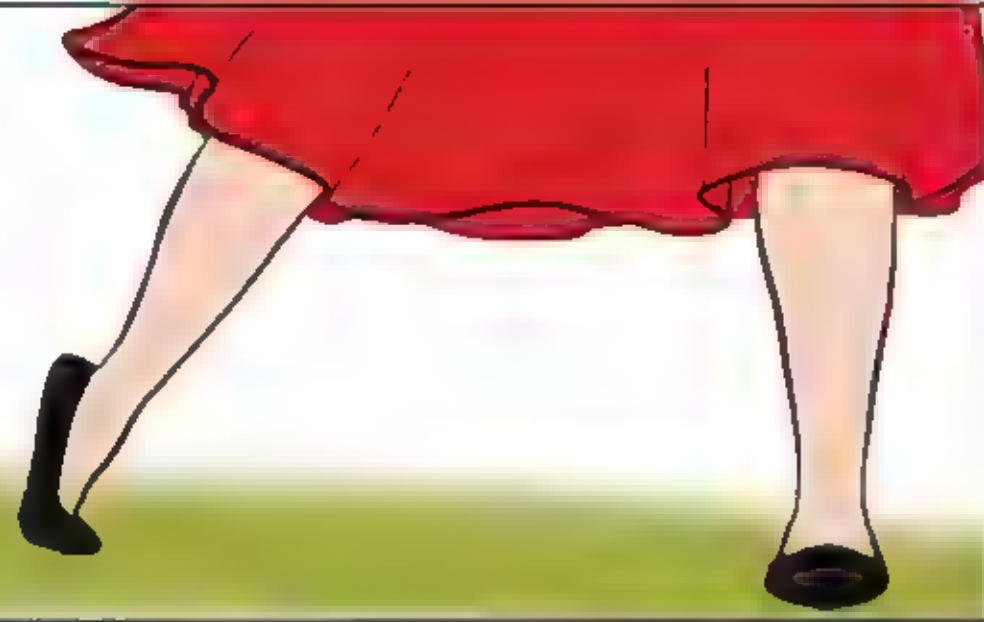
*Brook*



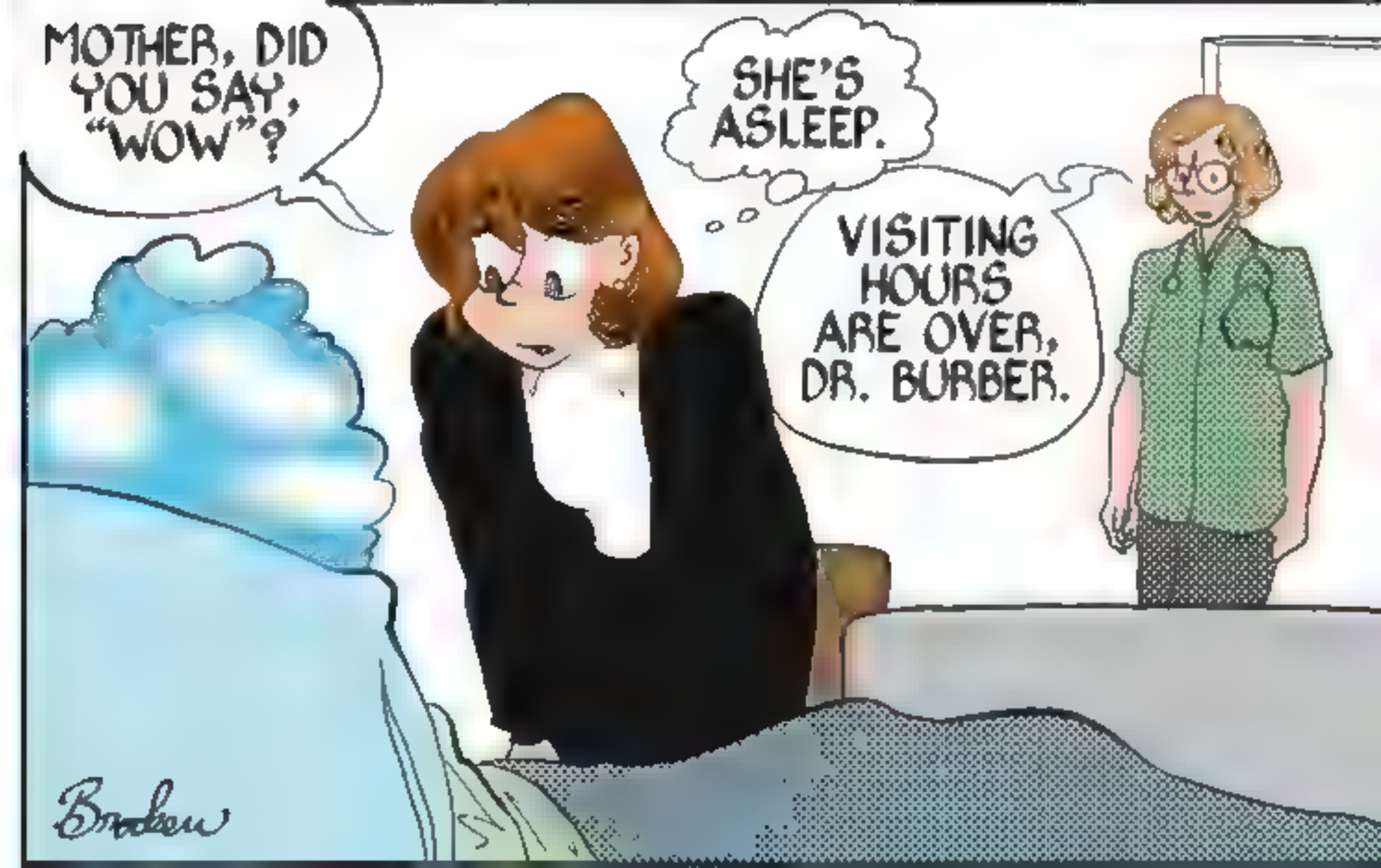
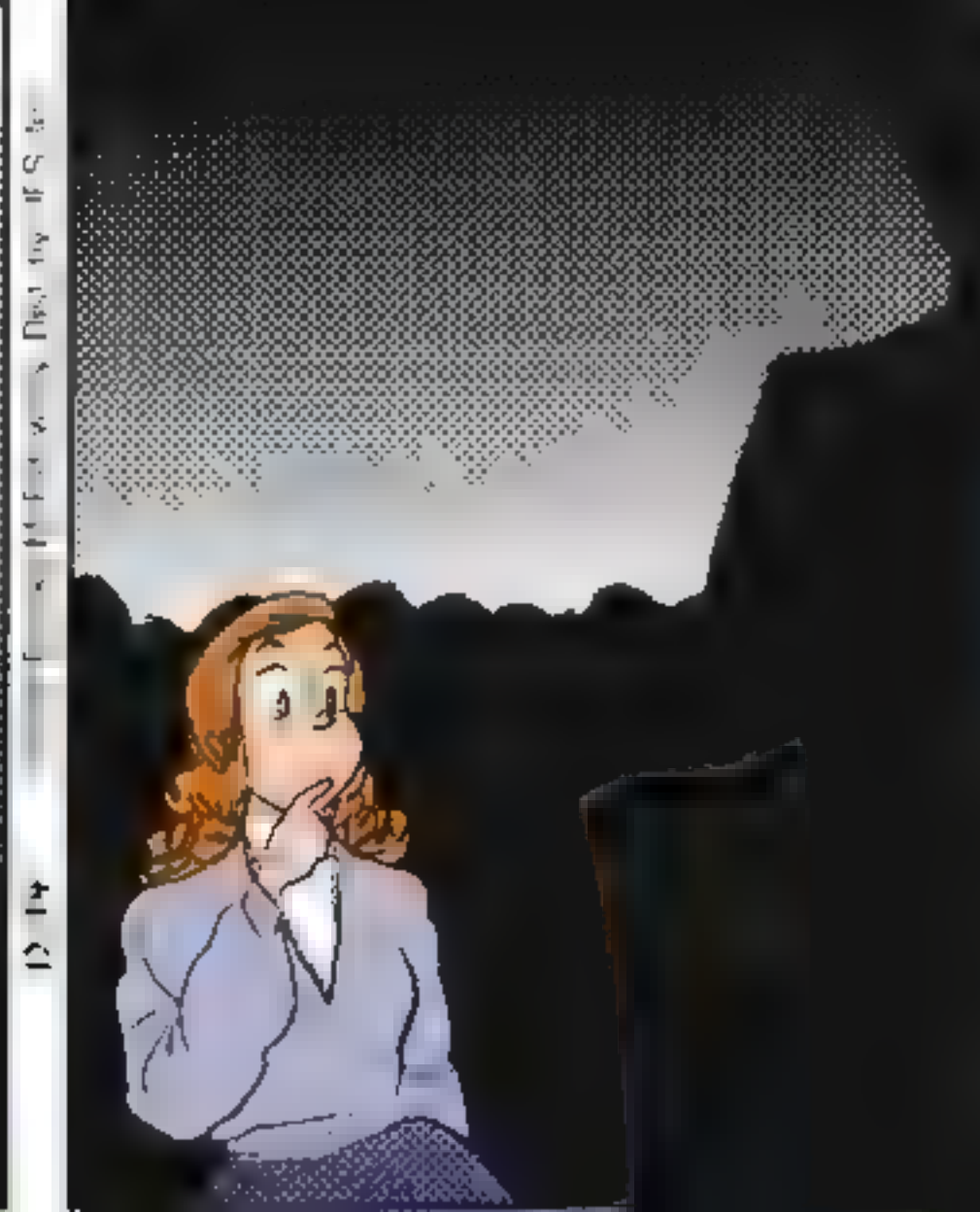
















I NEVER REALIZED  
GRAN  
WAS  
A MATA  
HARI.  
WHERE  
IS SHE  
NOW?  
...STILL  
IN THE  
HOSPITAL?

Bradshaw

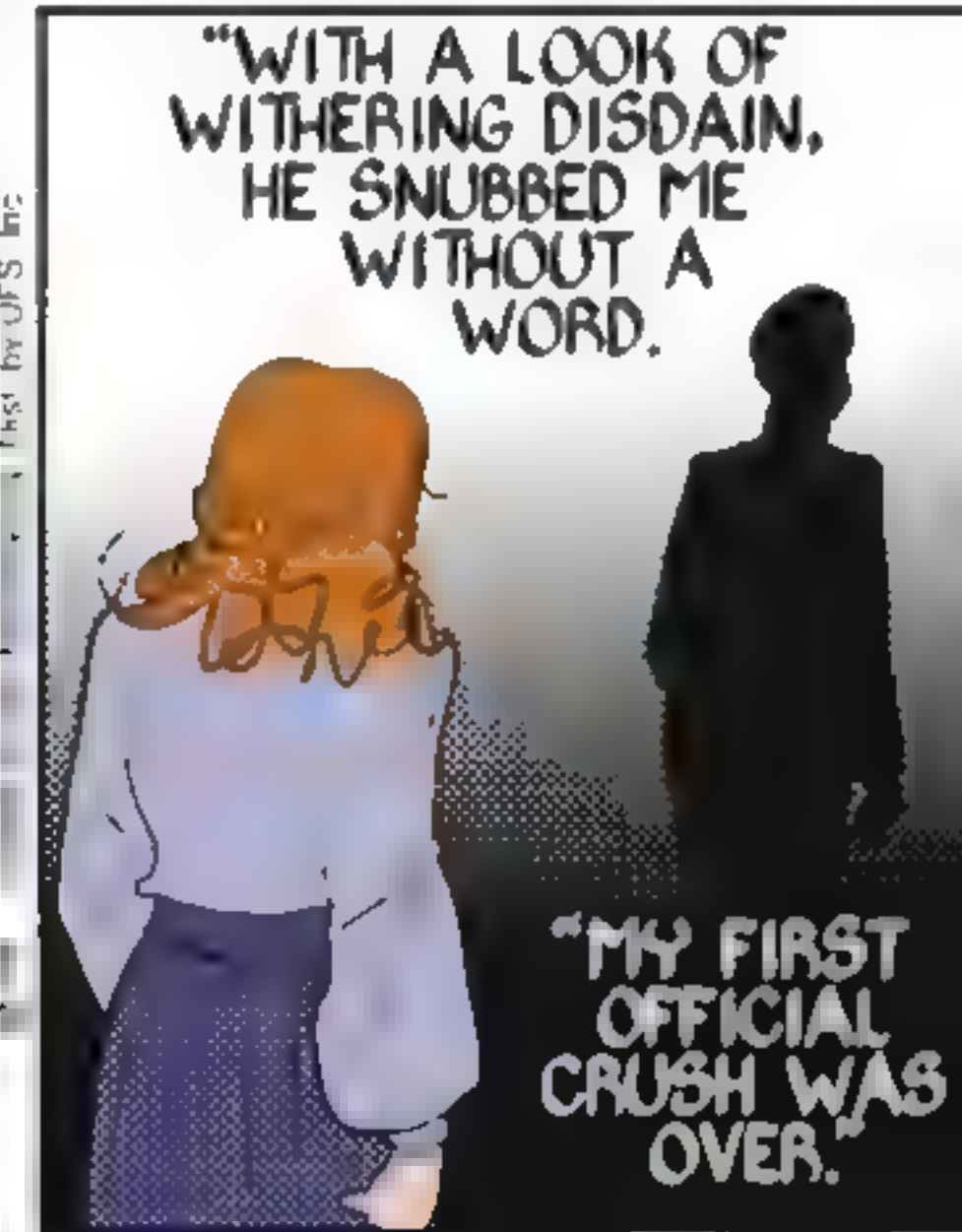
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12-16

CORPOREALLY,  
YES.

"THE REST  
OF HER, BY MY  
NEAREST CALCULATION,  
IS SOMEWHERE IN THE  
VICINITY OF 1944."







I WASN'T GOING TO LET  
IT GO AT THAT. I WANTED  
TO KNOW WHY HE TURNED  
HIS BACK ON ME.



"BUT HE WAS THE FIRST  
HALF OF THE PROGRAM,  
AND I WAS THE SECOND  
HALF."

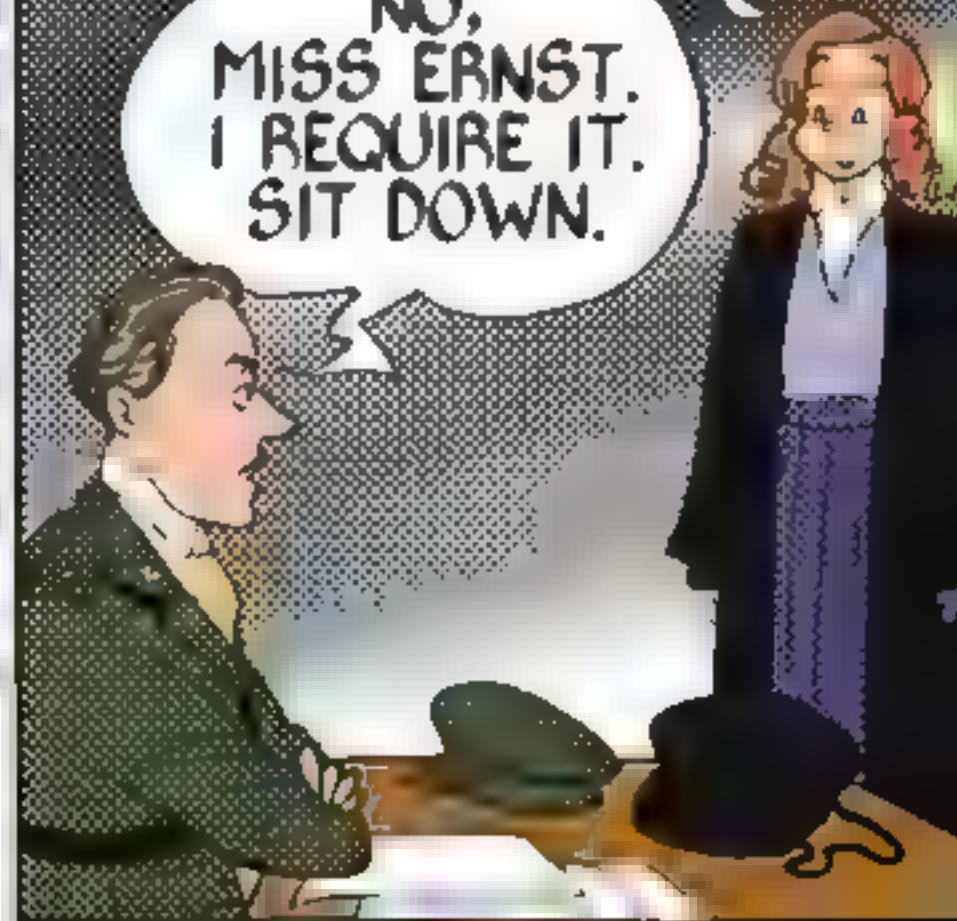


"FURTHERMORE,  
HE WASN'T THE  
ONLY ONE  
THAT DAY  
WHO TOOK  
A DISLIKE."

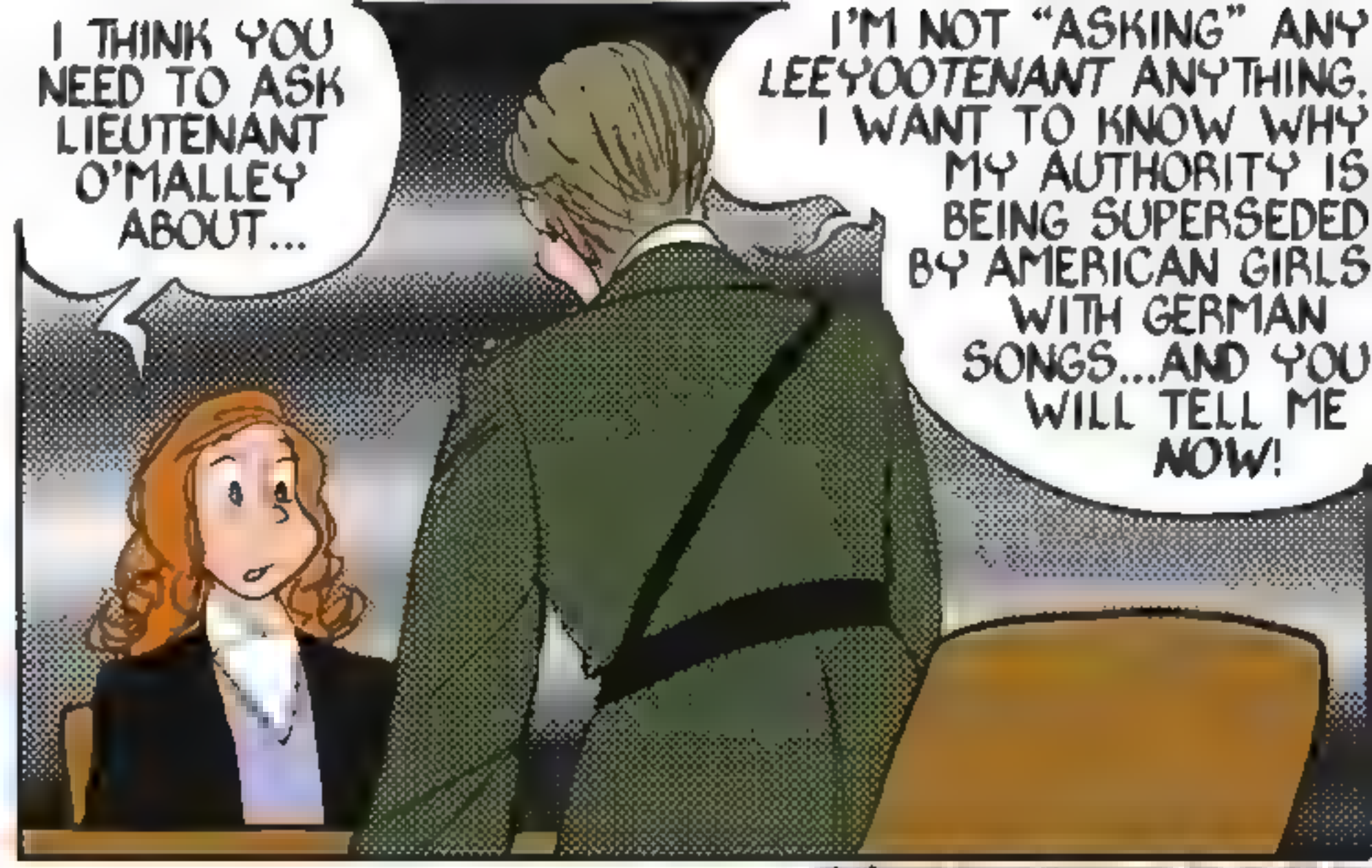
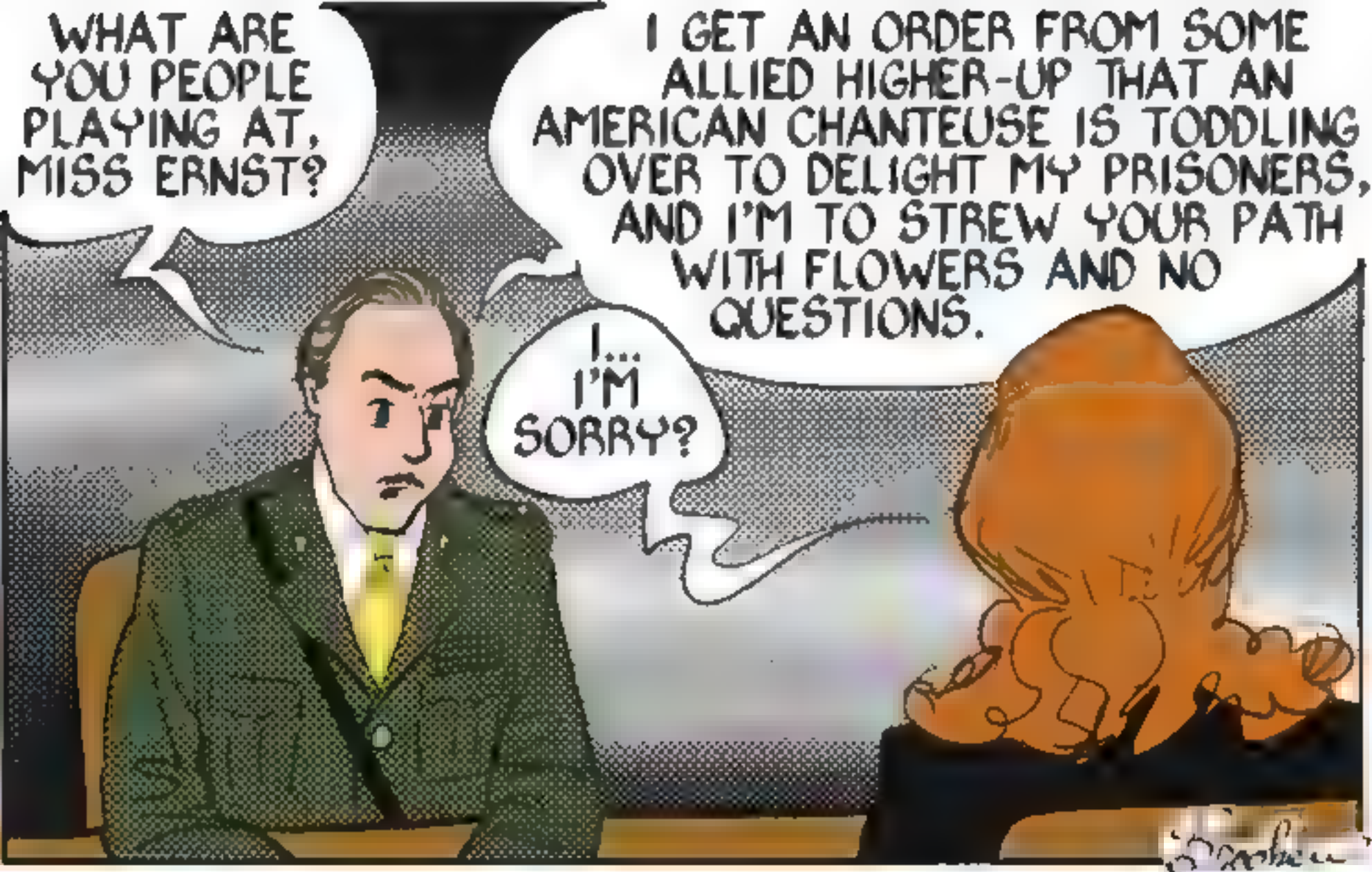


YOU WISH TO  
TALK TO ME?

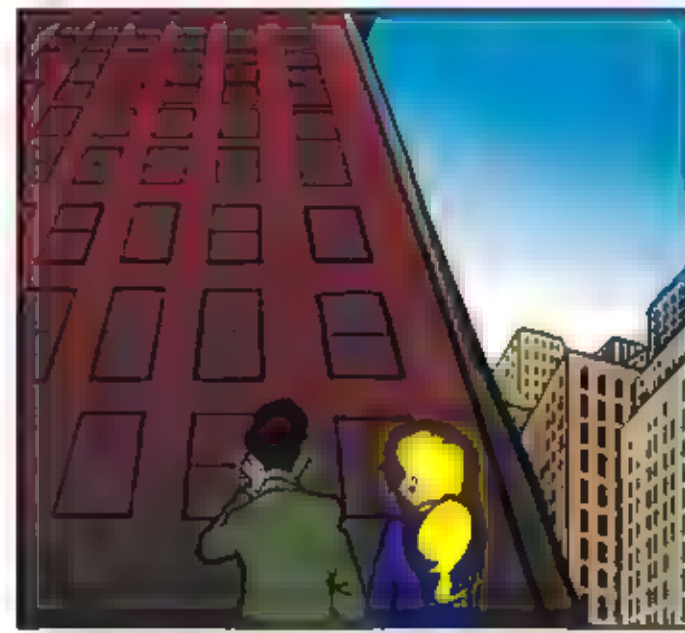
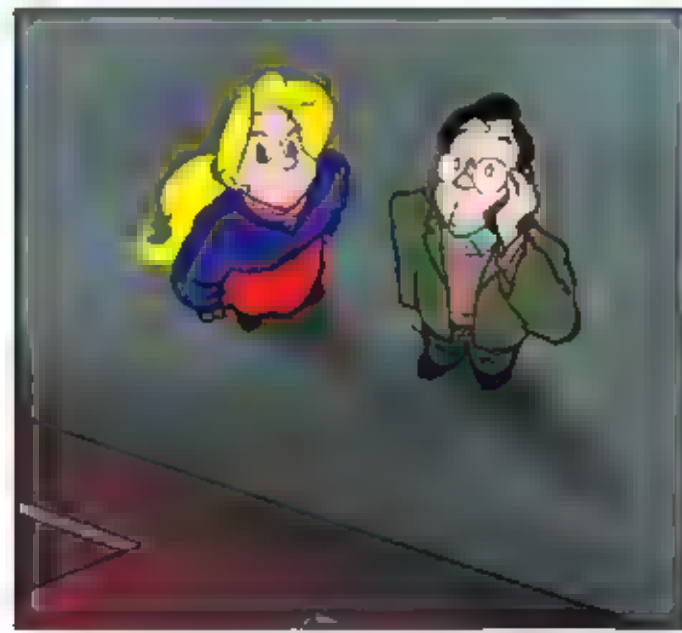
NO,  
MISS ERNST.  
I REQUIRE IT.  
SIT DOWN.



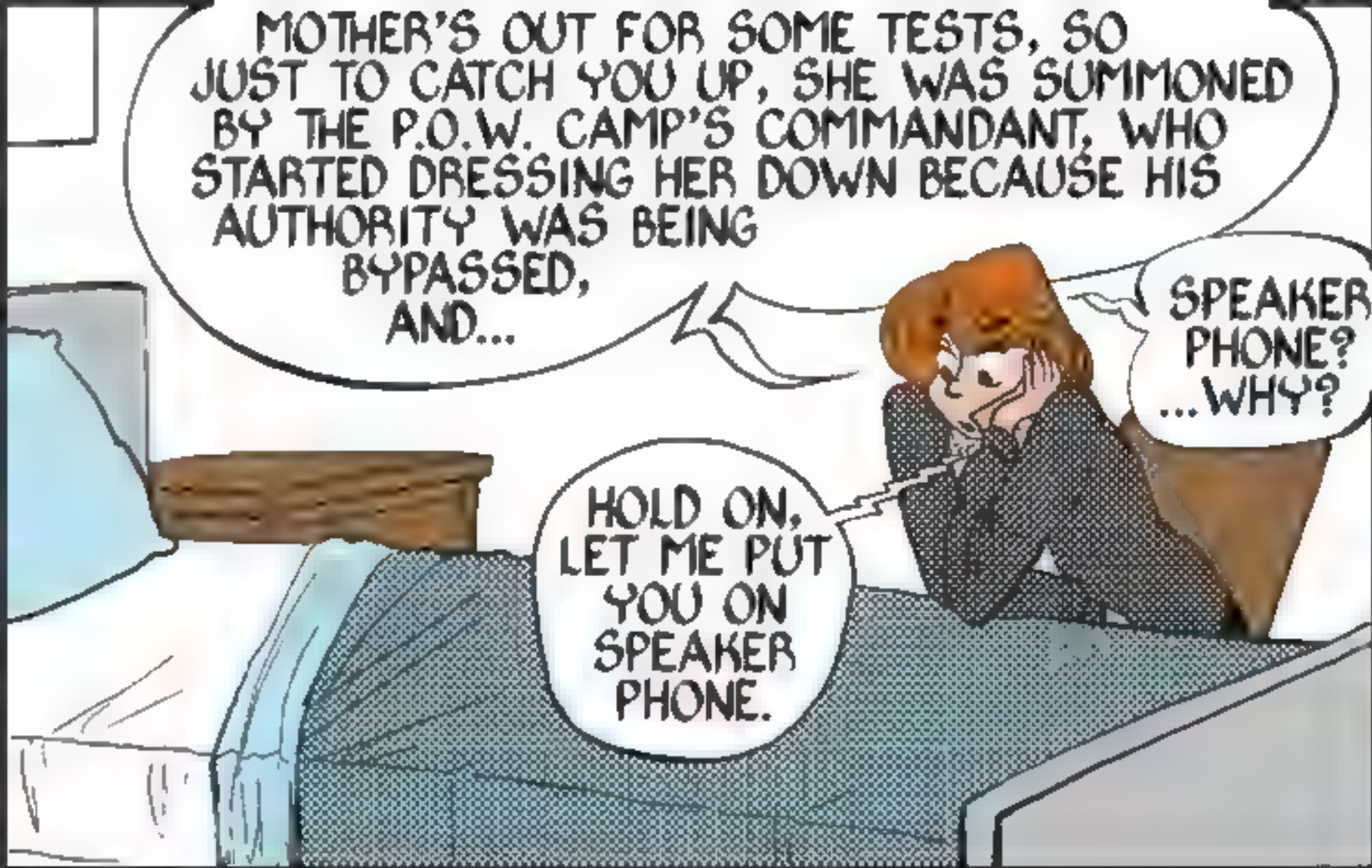














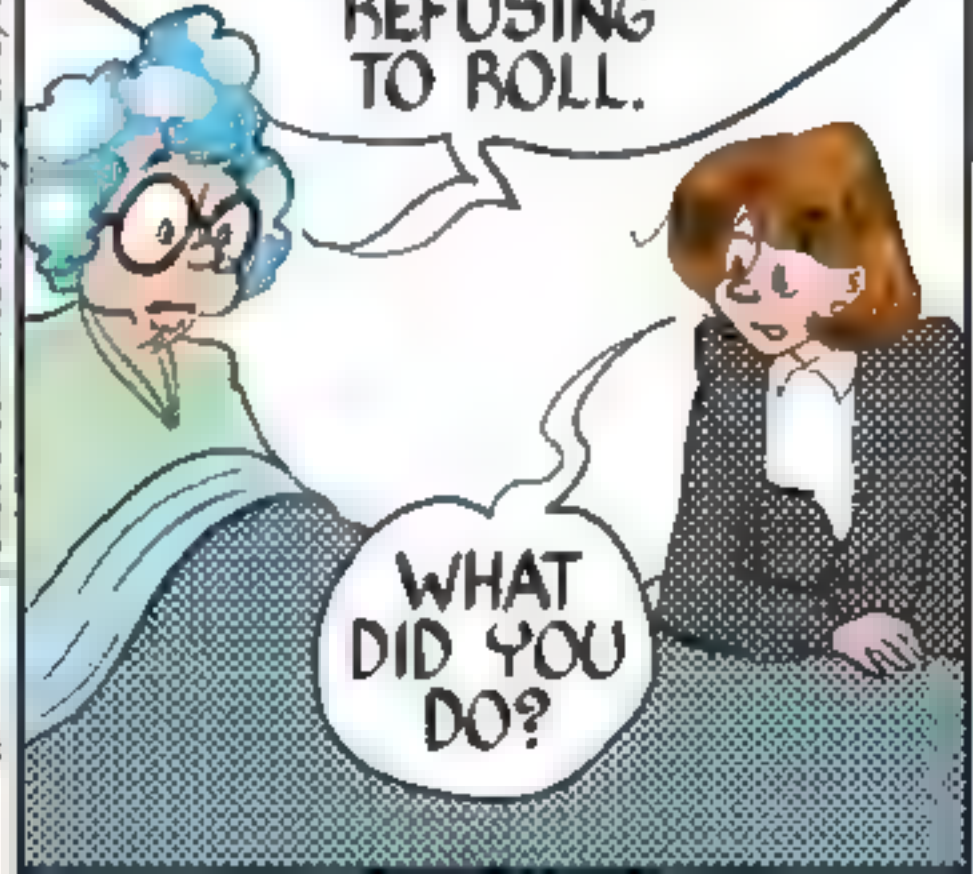
ALL I CAN GATHER, MISS ERNST, IS THAT YOU HAVE SOME SPECIAL HOLD ON SOMEONE IN LONDON, SOME NAMELESS ALLIED BIGWIG HAS PROCURED YOU AS HIS LITTLE BIT OF SKIRT.



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12 22

AT THAT POINT, ALTHOUGH BILL HAD WARNED ME THERE MIGHT BE PUNCHES WITH WHICH I'D HAVE TO ROLL, I FOUND MYSELF REFUSING TO ROLL.





GO AHEAD, CALL IN A GUARD, SO YOU  
CAN BE WITNESSED IN  
THIS TABLEAU AND  
THEREBY  
BECOME  
THE  
STUFF OF  
LEGEND.

OTHERWISE,  
THE NEXT THING  
YOU SAY TO ME  
HAD BETTER BE  
POLITE, AND  
PROMINENTLY  
FEATURE  
THE WORD  
"PLEASE."

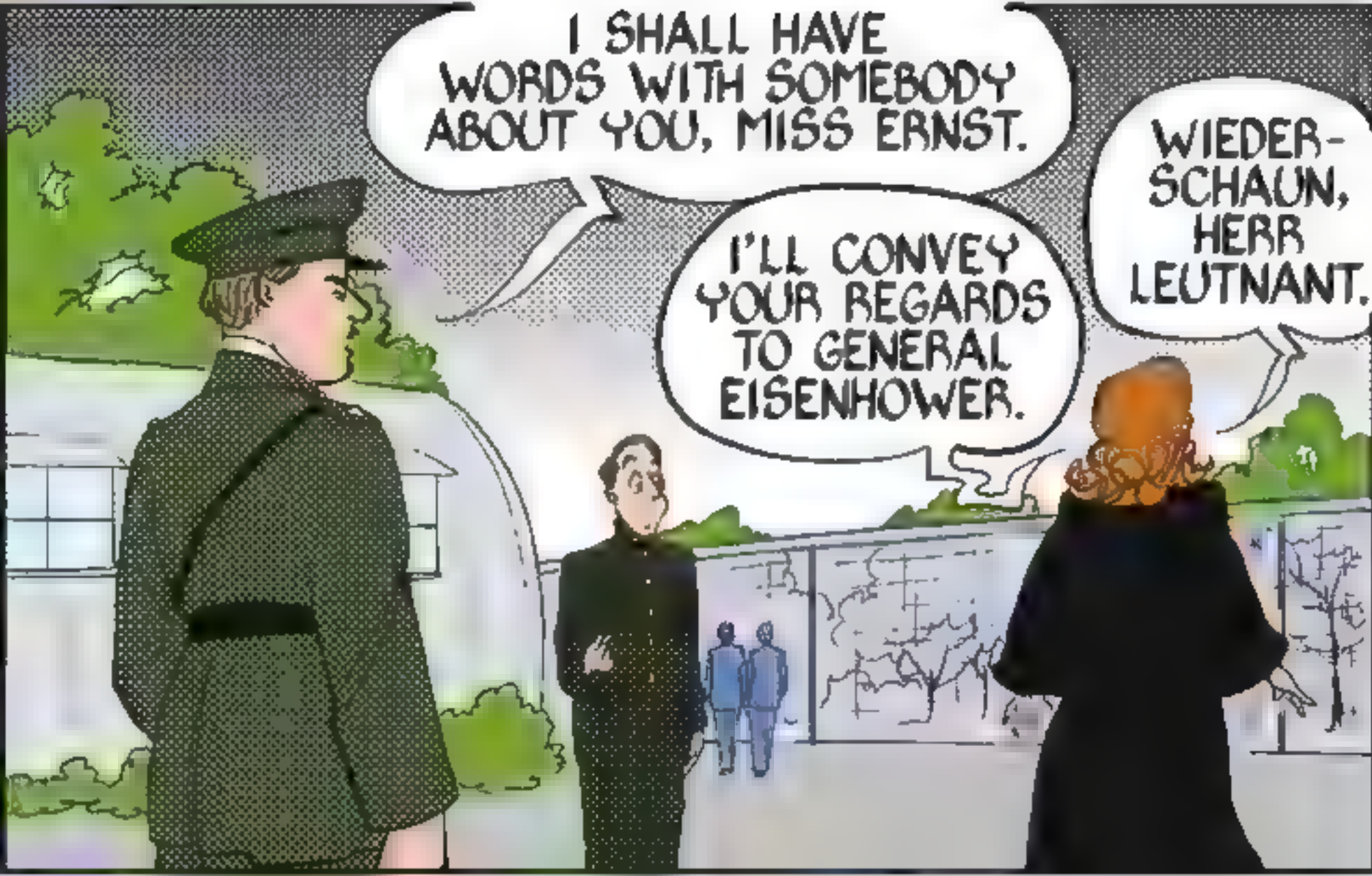


I IDDSIST YOU LET GO  
OF BY DOZE...

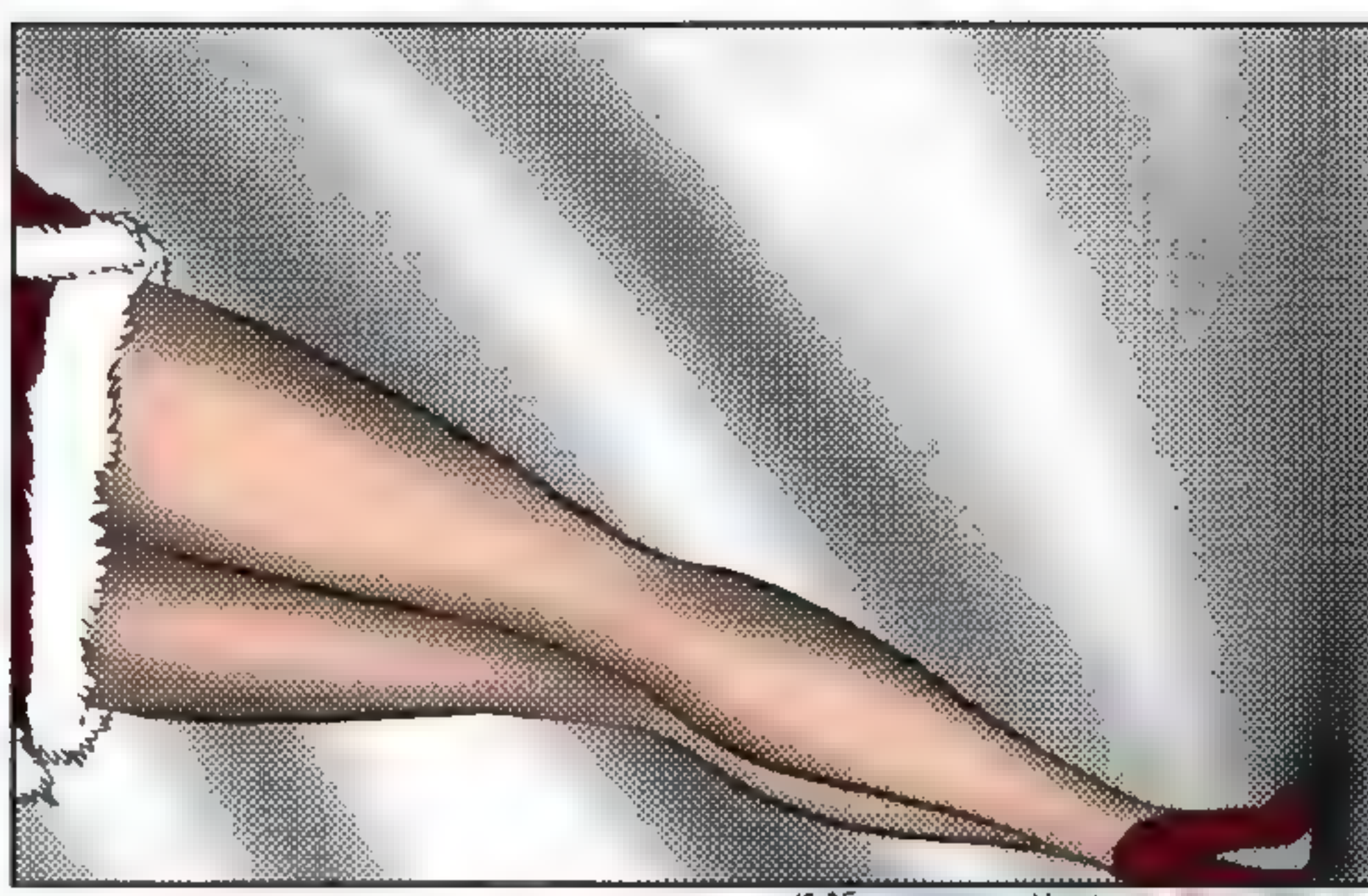
.....PLEASE.



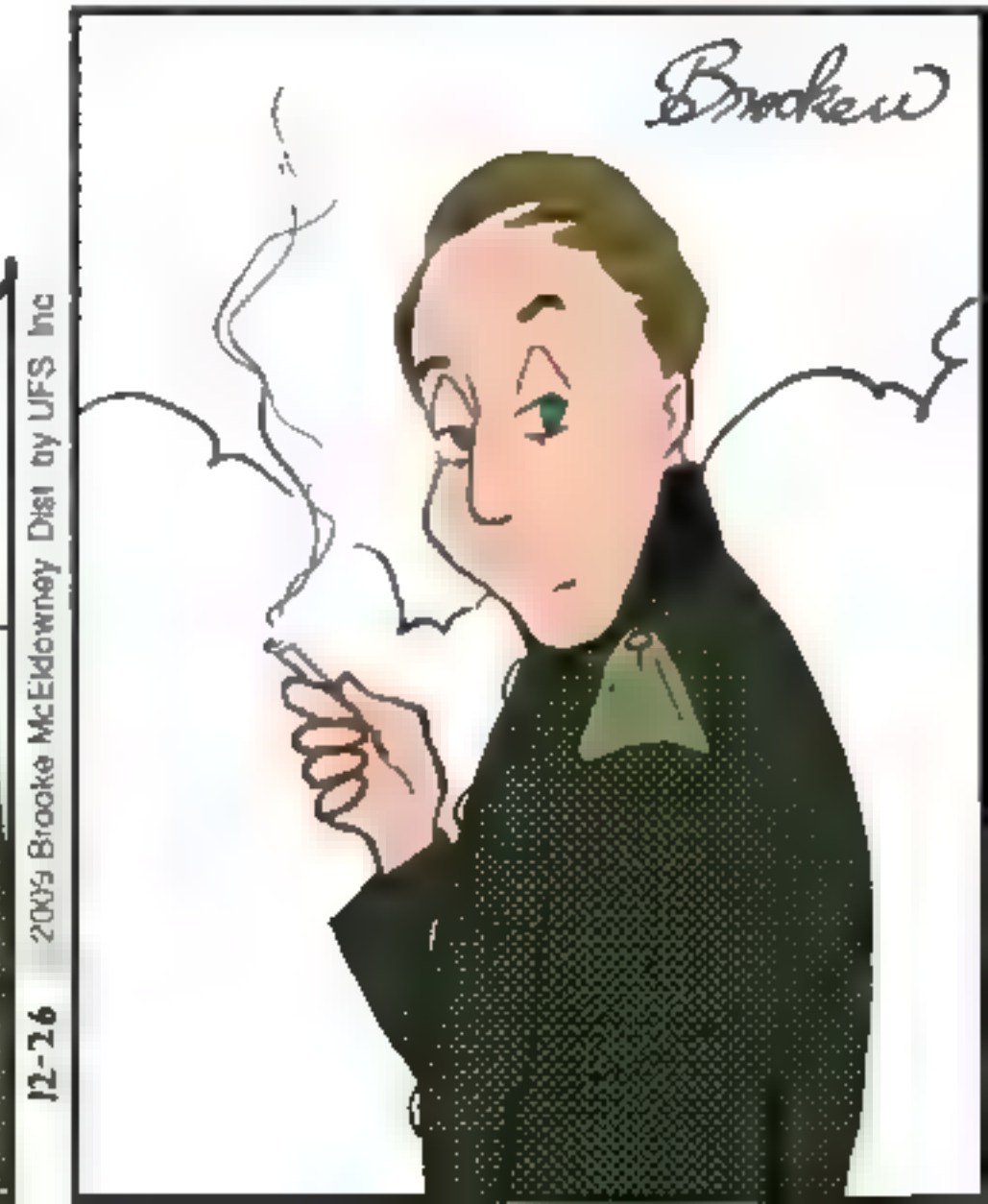
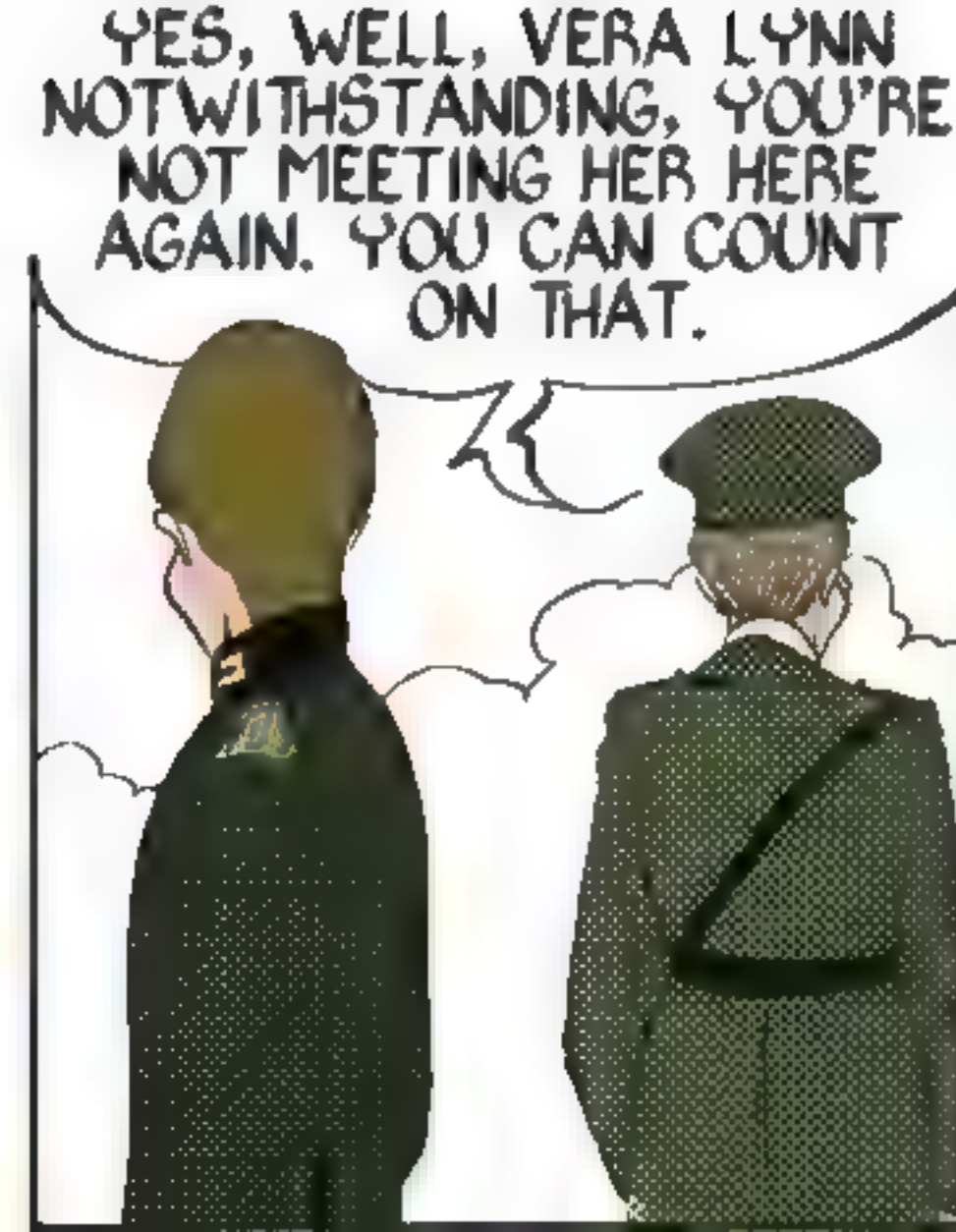
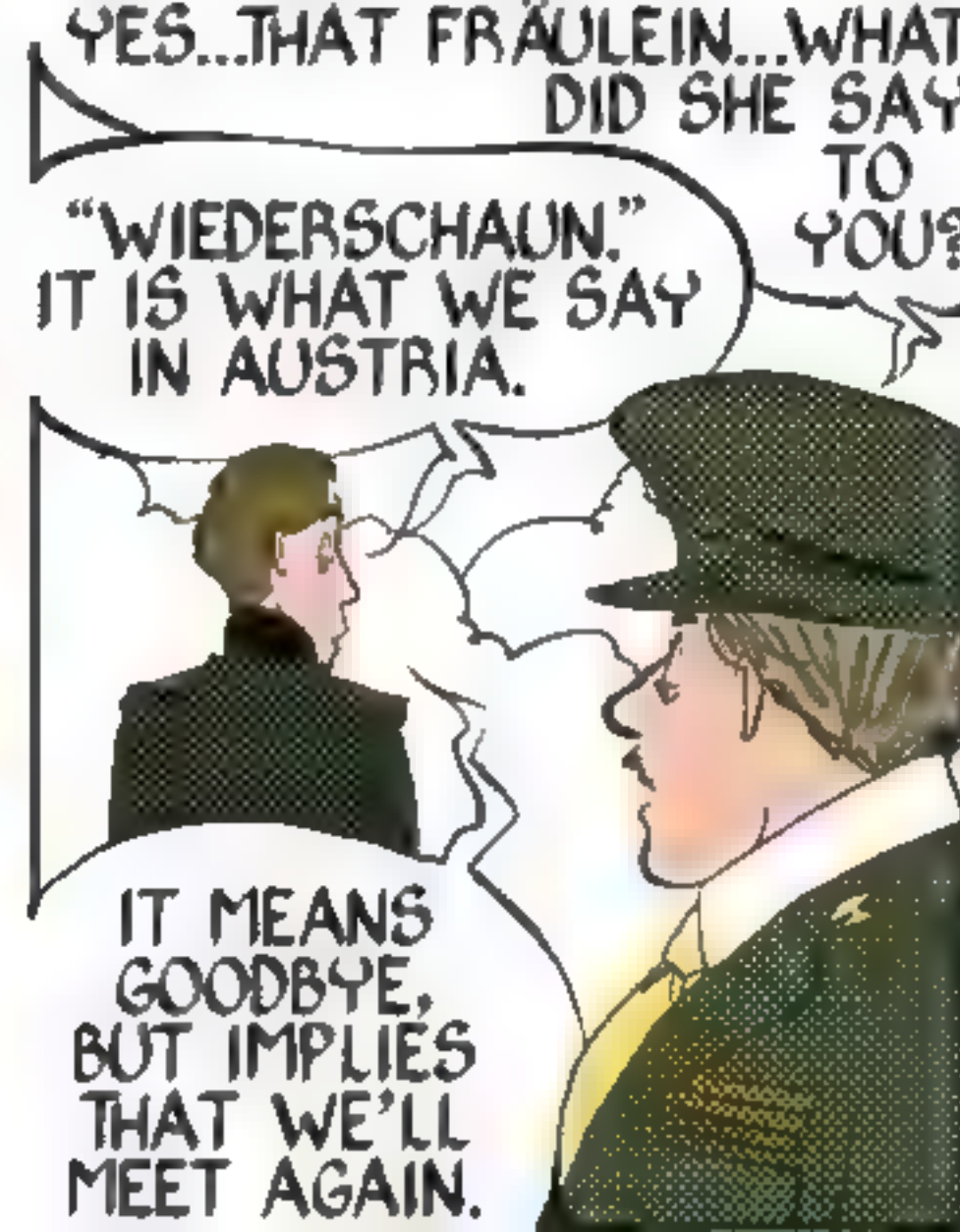
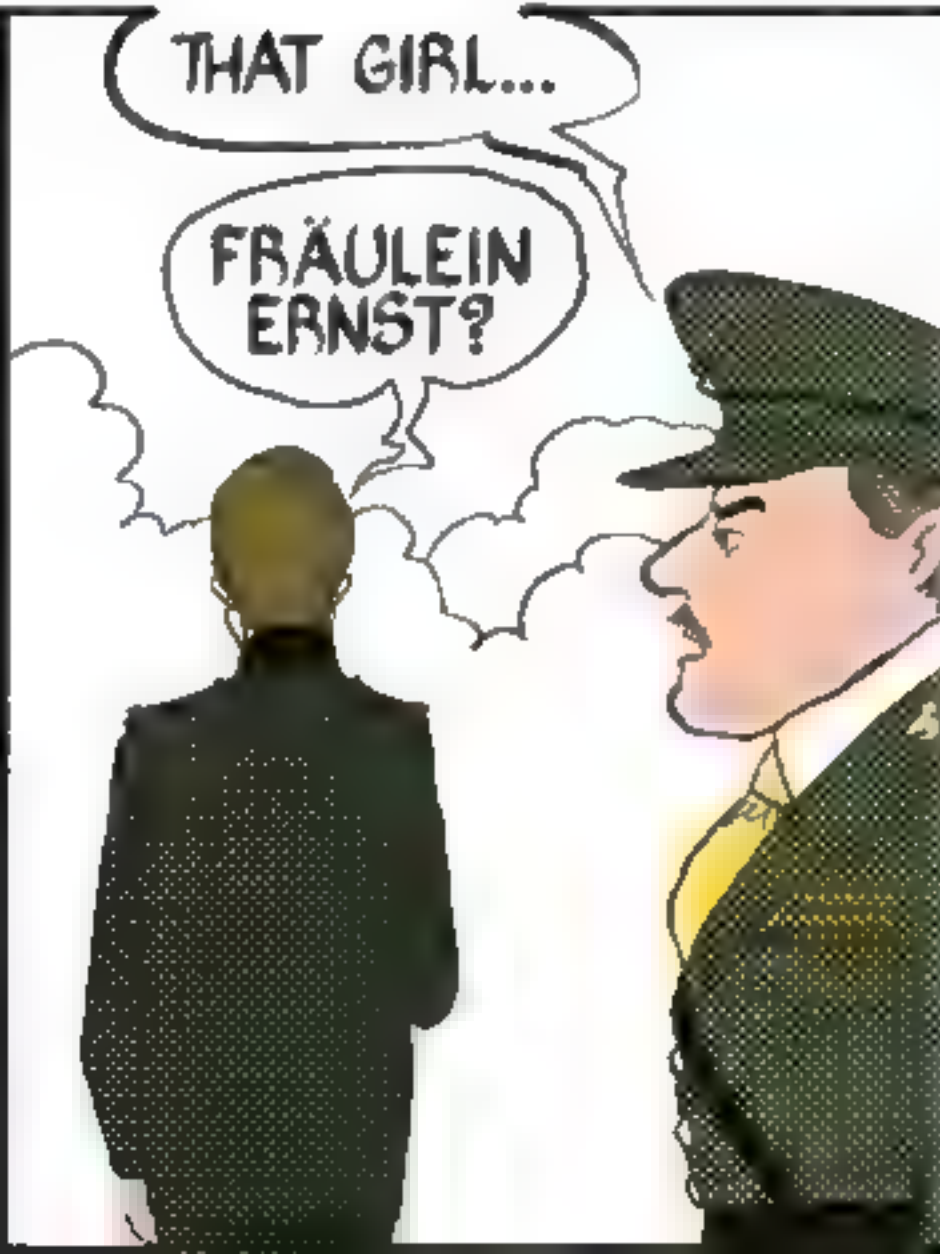


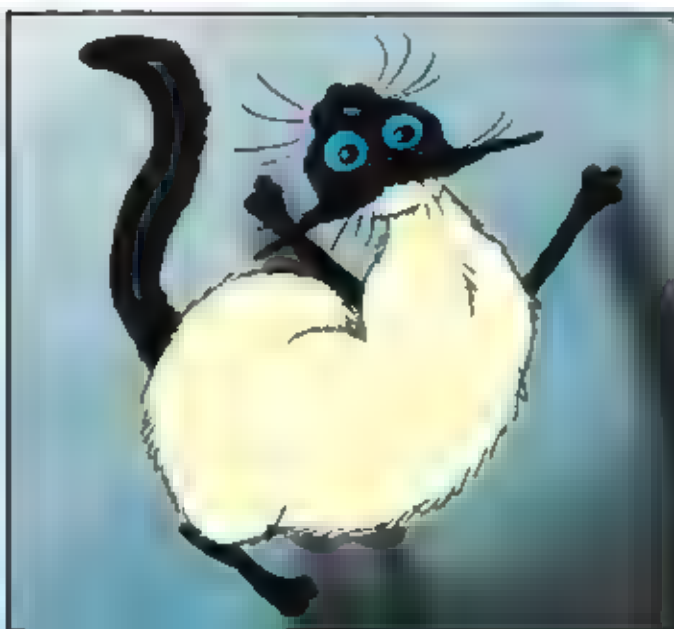
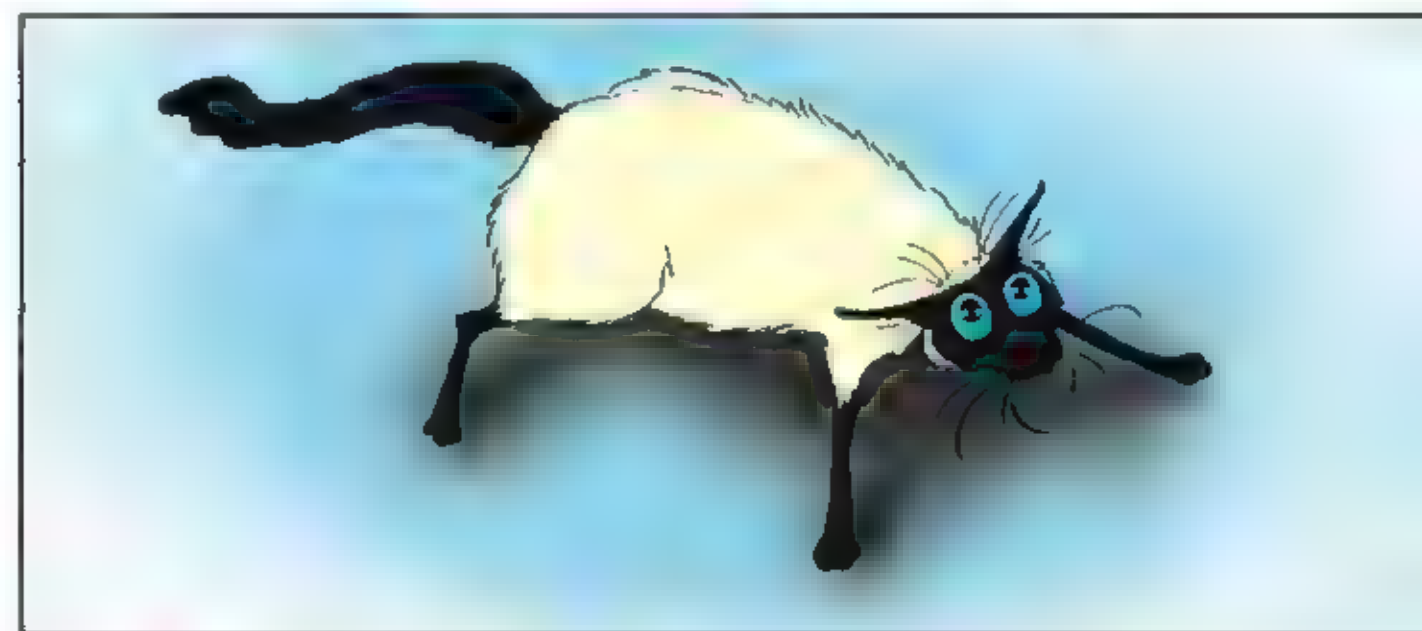
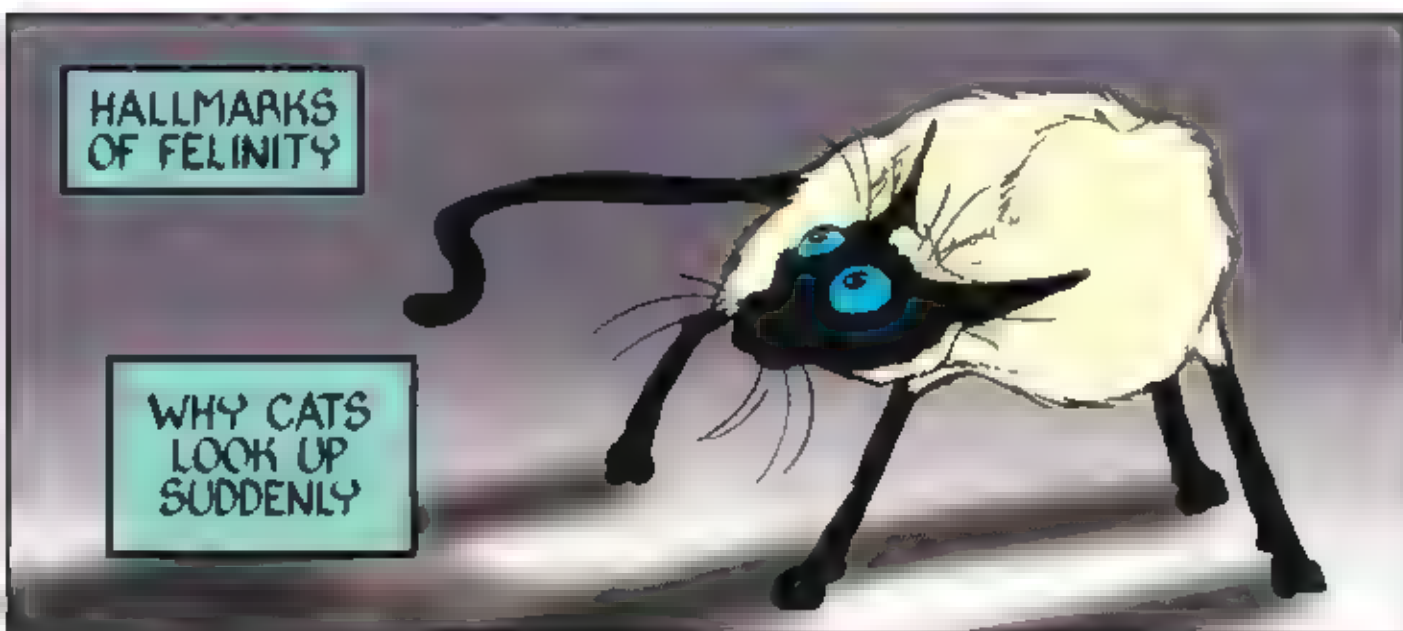




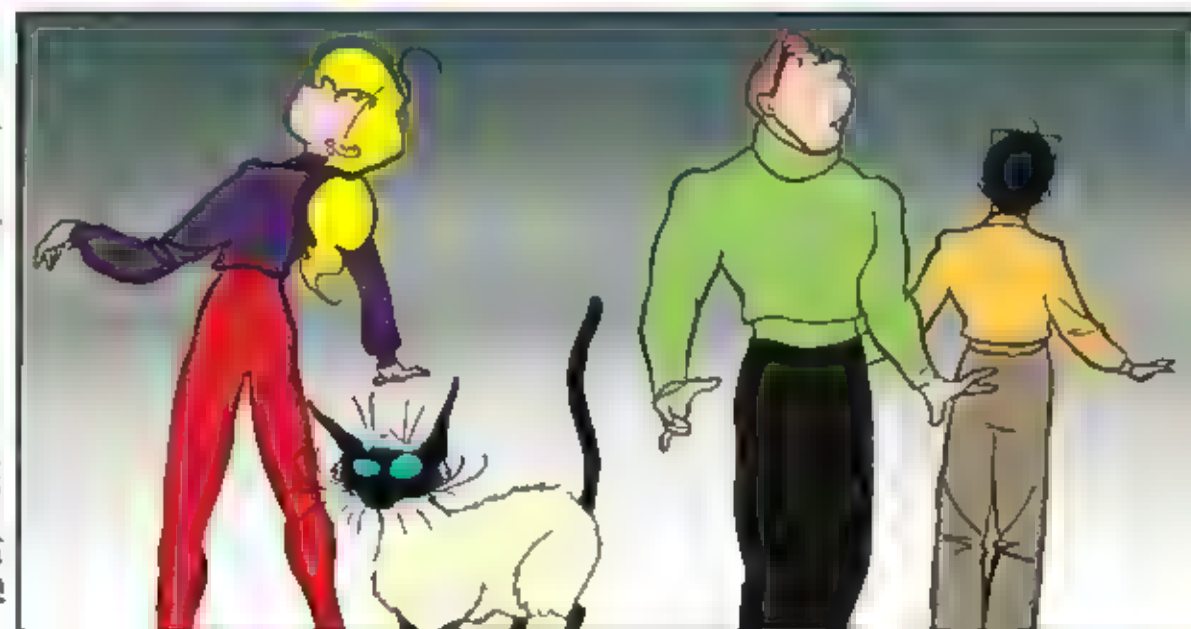




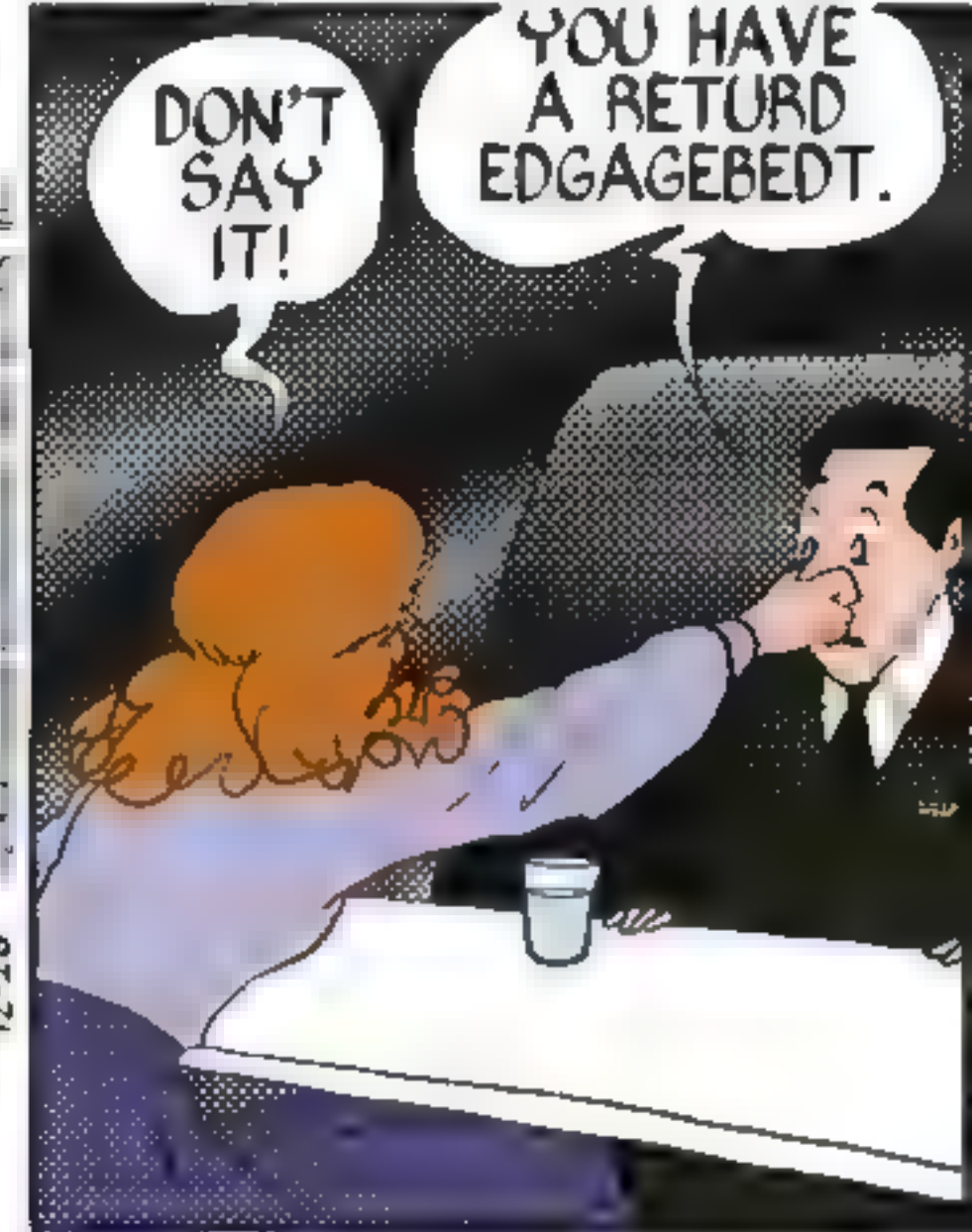
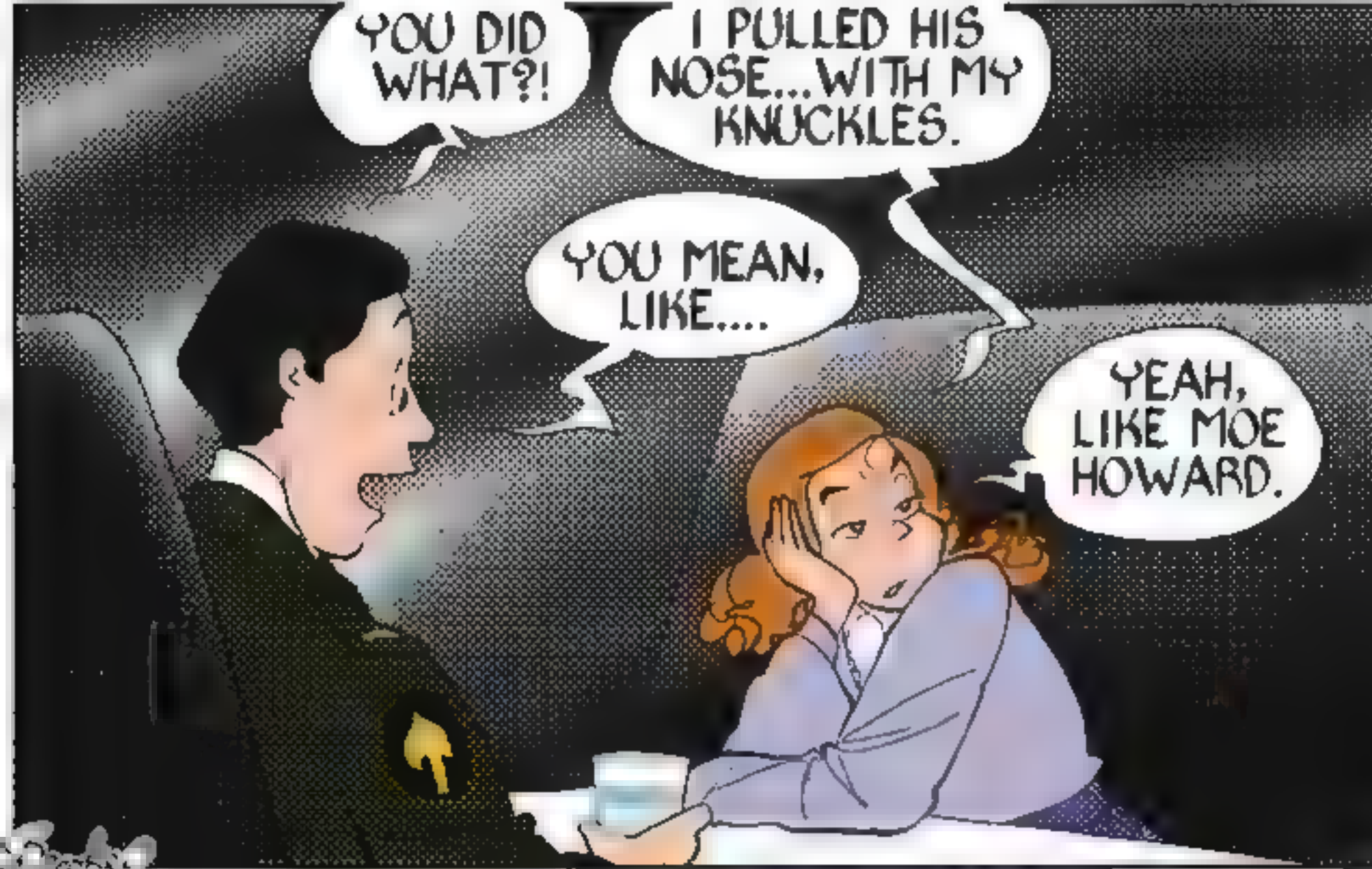




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THIS IS GOING TO BE  
JUST SWELL...  
THAT CAMP  
COMMANDANT  
HATES ME.  
HE'S  
PROBABLY  
OUT  
FOR MY  
HIDE...  
...AND HE  
CERTAINLY  
ISN'T GOING  
TO LET ME  
IN.

HE'LL ADMIT YOU.  
HE REALLY WON'T  
HAVE A CHOICE.  
BUT GIVE ME  
A FEW DAYS  
TO LET HIM  
COOL DOWN.  
THEN THEY'LL  
FORWARD HIM  
HIS ORDERS.

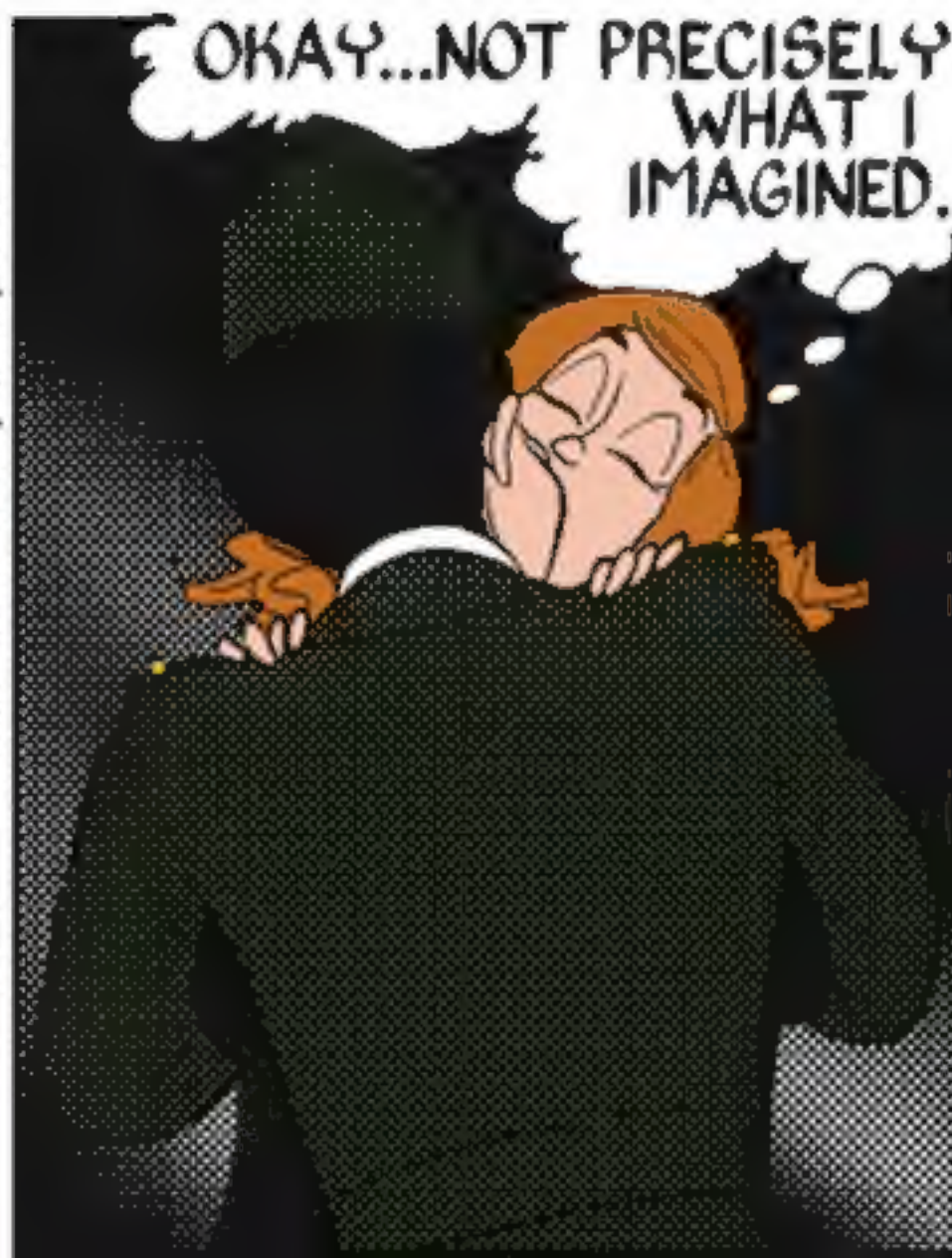
BUT  
WHAT DO  
I DO WHEN  
I RUN INTO  
HIM?

*Broken*



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OKAY...NOT PRECISELY  
WHAT I  
IMAGINED.

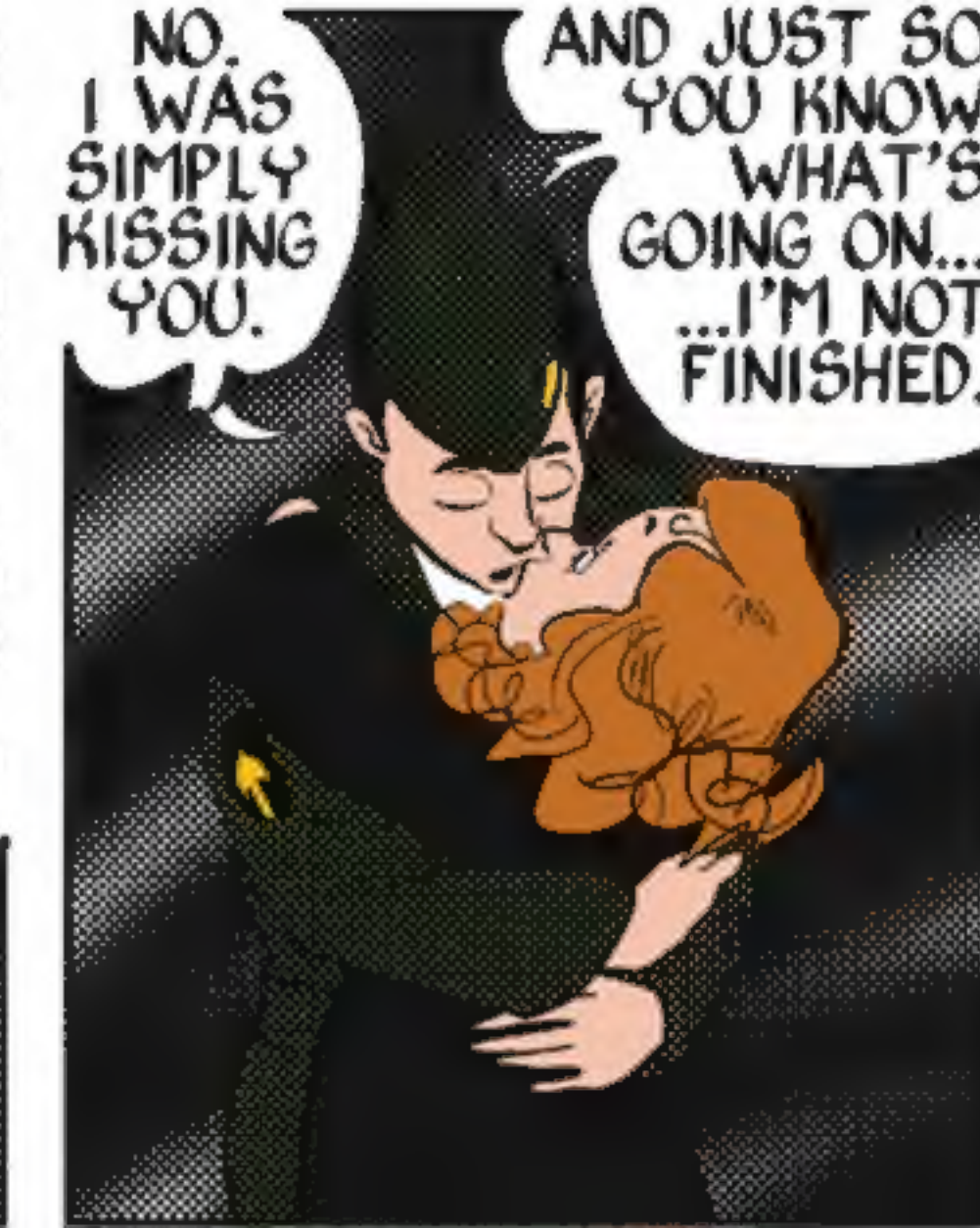
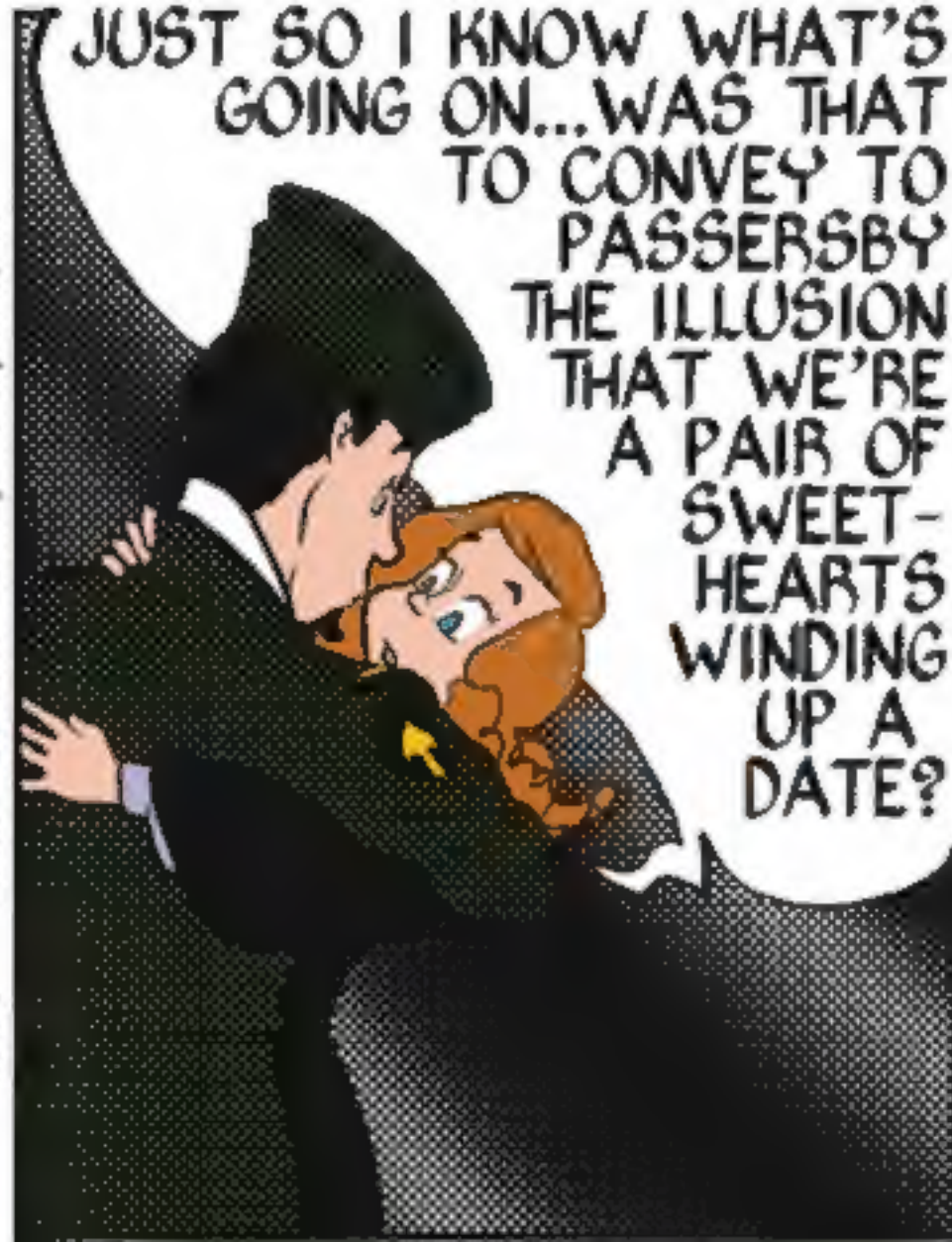






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